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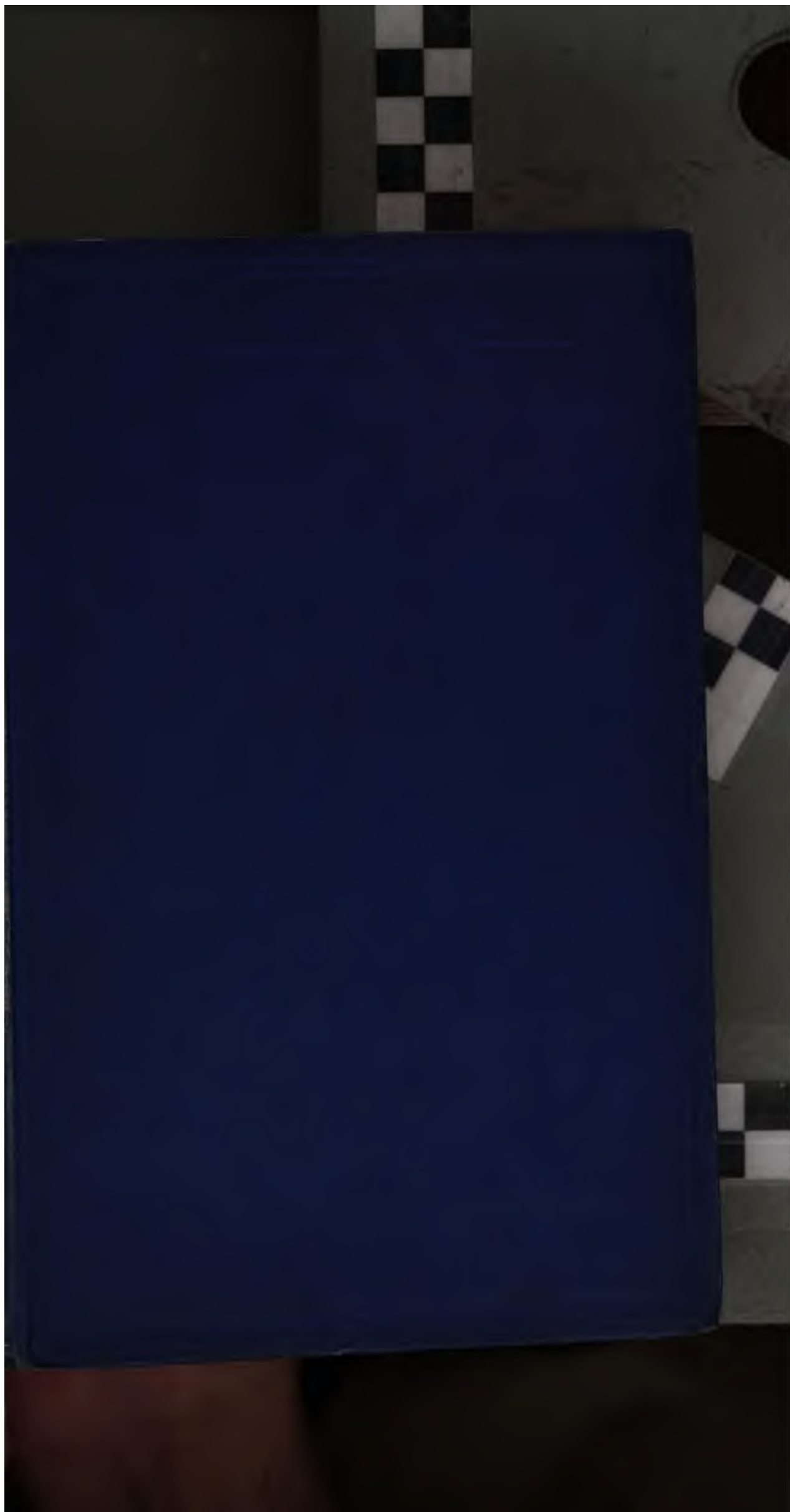
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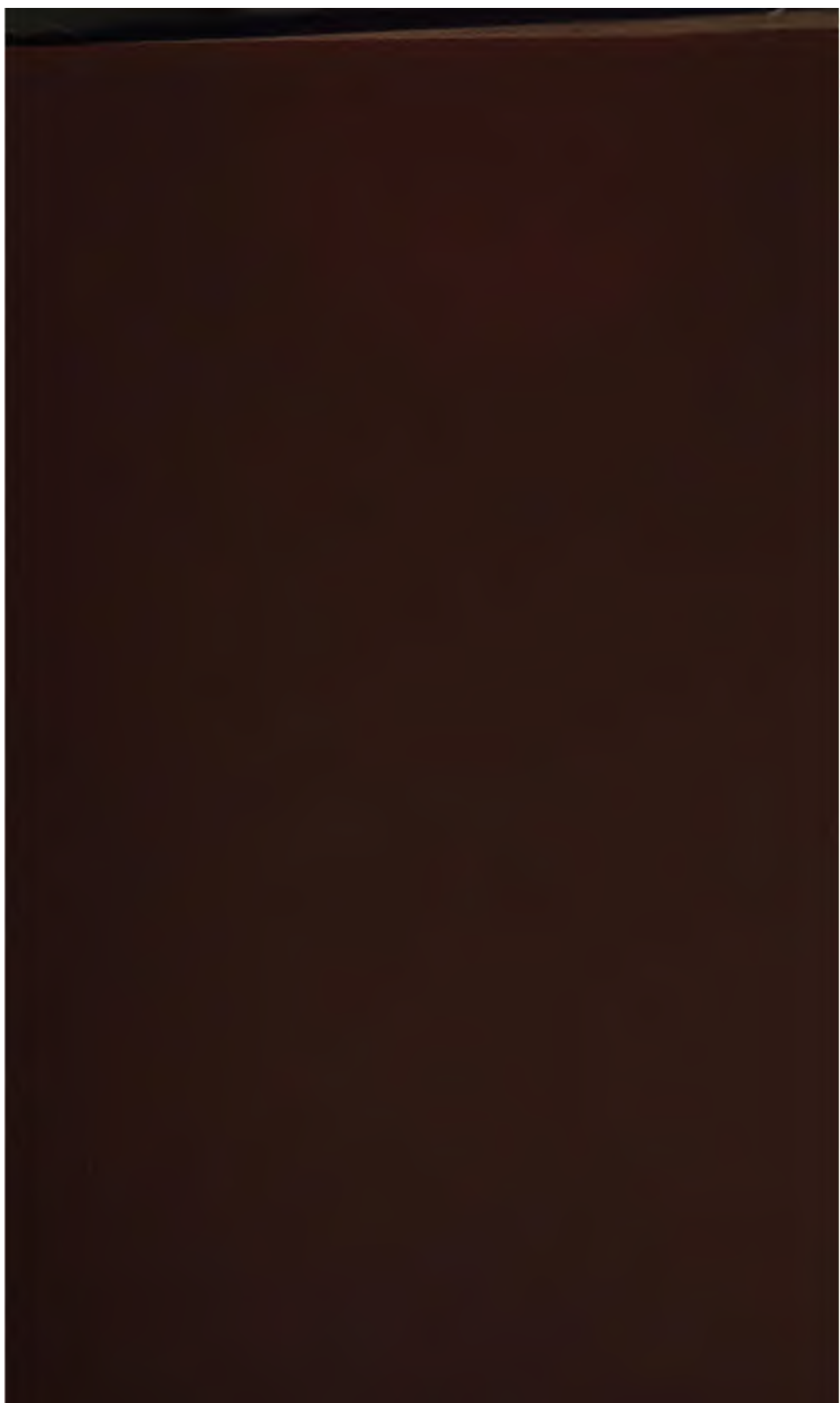
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THE  
LIFE AND ADMINISTRATION  
OF  
ROBERT BANKS,  
SECOND EARL OF LIVERPOOL, K.G.  
LATE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY.

*COMPILED FROM ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS.*

BY  
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UNDER THE BOURBONS," ETC.

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# *THE LIFE AND ADMINISTRATION*

OF

## LORD LIVERPOOL.

### CHAPTER XXIV.

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with Mr. Brougham and Mr. Denman—Wilberforce moves resolutions on the subject in the House of Commons—The Queen refuses compliance.

THE Government had been so long in the hands of the Prince who now succeeded to the throne, that it might have been expected that the affairs of the kingdom would proceed in their accustomed course with no variation of character; that nothing would be new but the name of the sovereign. But those who entertained such anticipations were greatly deceived. The first year of the new reign was signalized by dangers such as had but one precedent either in our own annals or in those of modern Europe; and by one transaction, full of disgrace, to which the history of no country afforded a parallel, and which, in more than one other nation, might have given a rude shock to the monarchy itself. That no permanent injury to the State resulted from it must be attributed partly to the manifest worthlessness of their idol, which soon forced itself on the conviction of even her own partisans, and still more to the depth and strength of the principle of loyalty to the throne itself as an institution which animated the whole population.

From this last difficulty the country was nearly saved by another calamity, which, though in reality of no strange or unnatural character, would nevertheless at such a moment have struck all men with astonishment and sympathy. George III. died on the evening of the 29th of January, and in less than eight and forty hours afterwards George IV. seemed on the point of sharing his grave. When his father died he was confined to his room with a severe cold, which his necessary attendance at the Privy Council the next day aggravated into an inflammation of the lungs, that for some days seemed to baffle all the skill of his physicians, and was only subdued by the judicious audacity of one of them, Sir Matthew Tierney, who, as a last resource, ventured on a bleeding so copious as to seem for a moment little more than a substitution of one danger

for another. The King, however, had a constitution strong enough to bear the exhaustion, and, after a few days, no trace was left of the disease beyond the weakness produced by the violence of the remedy. When at the worst it had been increased by mental agitation, for the very first measure on which he had been called to decide involved the question how his wife, who had now become the Queen, should be treated; and there were moments when his imagination, stimulated by his bodily sufferings, represented her to him as standing by his bedside and demanding her rights.

It will, however, be more convenient to relate the other events of the year before we approach that painful subject, and the delay will not be long because, from the moment that her Majesty arrived in England, and thus compelled the Ministry to instant decision and action, her case so completely absorbed the attention of the Government, the Parliament, and the whole nation, that there was no room for any other question. The Parliament was dissolved within a few days of its reassembling; but even that brief session was sufficient to show how strong was the determination of the Opposition to make the differences between the royal pair a stalking-horse for future attacks on the Ministry: one member, who had been returned to Parliament for the first time the year before, and who subsequently attained considerable notoriety, Mr. Joseph Hume, the representative of Aberdeen, making a formal complaint that the Queen's name had not been inserted in the Liturgy, and also that no distinct provision had been made for her support, though he well knew that the King himself was in a precisely similar position, and that the consideration of the Civil List had been postponed, as propriety manifestly dictated, till the meeting of the new Parliament.

The session was also marked by a far more striking incident than the ambitious factiousness of any unscrupulous partisan; the discovery of a conspiracy which aimed at throwing the whole kingdom into confusion by

the assassination of the entire body of the ministers. Amid the consternation which such a deed, if successfully accomplished, could not fail to create, it was hoped that opportunities might be found for burning the different barracks in London, storming and plundering the Bank, and perhaps even for attacking the palace itself. The chief conspirator was Arthur Thistlewood, a man of respectable birth and education, who had formerly borne a commission in the army, but having visited Paris during the fever of the Revolution, had imbibed the principles of the Jacobins, and since his return from France had been actively engaged in endeavours to spread discontent and seditious disaffection in this country. A couple of years before he had been brought to trial, and, having escaped conviction only because those who conducted the prosecution had unwisely exaggerated the case against him into a charge of high treason, which the evidence was insufficient to support, though abundantly sufficient to establish a charge of sedition, at the close of the trial he had the absurd impudence to challenge Lord Sidmouth to a duel, for which he was sentenced to imprisonment; and on his discharge his evil passions, now inflamed by a thirst for vengeance for his personal sufferings, prompted him to plan the atrocious massacre of the Home Secretary himself and all his colleagues. He collected a band of nearly fifty ruffians to execute his design; but, luckily, one of them, after a few meetings held to arrange their method of proceeding, was seized with compunction, and betrayed the plot. It was of great importance to crush so nefarious conspiracy by the seizure of the whole gang, and the ministers, with address equal to their firmness, concealed altogether their knowledge of what was in agitation till the very last moment, when the assassins should be collected for the actual execution of their enterprise, and the magistrates should thus be enabled to lay hands on the entire body. Thistlewood, with four other of the ringleaders, was executed; a few were transported; the rest were spared.

And in all probability the Government and the general cause of order and loyalty would have been greatly strengthened by this demonstration of the atrocities of which the extreme Radicals were capable, had it not been for the fresh encouragement to evil which was afforded so immediately afterwards by the proceedings which were the result of the Queen's return to England.

The new Parliament met in the last week of April, but the only debate which seems to deserve notice as having more than a passing interest, or any bearing on the general interests or the subsequent policy of the country, was one which was brought in by Lord Lansdowne, when towards the end of May he moved for "a committee to enquire into the means of extending and securing the foreign trade of the country," with the avowed object of procuring from it a report which should recommend "the removal of some of the restrictions with which our foreign trade was shackled." The motion was rendered especially memorable by the part which Lord Liverpool took upon it; since he not only declared his willingness to grant the committee, but also availed himself of the occasion to express his condemnation, not only of any regulations or proposals which were designed to favour one trade or one interest at the expense of another, but generally of all protection as a principle. Lord Lansdowne had spoken of the great advantages which might result from unrestricted freedom of trade, and, in commenting on his language, Lord Liverpool affirmed that "of the soundness of that general principle there could be no question. He could entertain no doubt of what would have been the great advantages to the civilized world if the system of unrestricted trade had been acted upon by every nation from the earliest period of its commercial intercourse with its neighbours. If we had risen to greatness under a different system, though some supposed that we had risen in consequence of it, others, of whom he himself was one, believed that we had risen in spite of it. But however true this might be, and

however deep his conviction of its truth, it did not follow that a nation like this could at once abandon a long-established system merely because its theoretical imperfection was acknowledged. We had grown up under it ; the system of other nations was equally founded on it ; and every consideration of our own condition, and of the habits and views of other nations, showed that it would be impossible suddenly to adopt the system of free trade. He might regret that the system was ever commenced ; but, as he could not recall that act, he must submit to the inconveniences by which it was attended, rather than expose the country to evils of much greater magnitude. He might regret that protecting duties, which had brought about so artificial a state of commerce, had been originally imposed ; but it was not because a thing had been wrongly done that it could therefore be undone. Another difficulty in the way of at once removing the existing restrictions from trade would be found in the jealousy which the other countries of Europe felt of our manufactures, since that feeling would indispose them to any measure or system which might afford an additional opening to and market for the produce of our different arts. If we were to remove the duties which we at present imposed on the productions of those nations, he saw no reason to believe that we should obtain any corresponding favours or advantages from them." He took an extended survey of our whole system of commerce, manufactures, and agriculture ; admitting that at the moment there was a falling off in the exportation of British produce, but tracing that to the general distress which still existed in every part of the world, and which, as Lord Lansdowne had admitted, was still "to be ascribed to the extraordinary convulsions of the last twenty years. It was impossible but that the instability of property, the creation of fictitious capital, and all the other evils which arose during those convulsions should operate in the production of great distress in every country, lasting long after the re-establishment of peace had terminated the convulsions



themselves. The distress had reached to America, even though she had had no share in the great European war, except, as the only neutral power, to profit by it greatly from the extension of her carrying trade; and she was now suffering from the effects of her extraordinary past prosperity."

Of the general condition of the country Lord Liverpool took a sanguine view. He trusted greatly to the recent regulations for the gradual resumption of cash payments, not only as a gradual remedy for the evils which had been felt, but as a security against their recurrence. For, in his eyes, there was no surer source of a periodical recurrence of commercial distress than "the creation and extension of fictitious capital; and of an appearance of prosperous trade without the reality, which was the inevitable consequence of a paper currency. He was eager to extend our warehousing system so as to make this country the general *entrepôt* of commerce. Mr. Pitt, who had originated that system, had always designed to extend it as rapidly as it could be connected with arrangements of sufficient security for our revenue. For the same reason he was equally desirous to remove the transit duties, to allow goods of every kind to come and go free of duty, or at most with a very moderate impost. He doubted indeed whether the instant benefit which some persons expected could flow from any legislation; it appeared to him that it was from time and patience that our chief expectations of relief must be derived; and, though he was willing to give a fair hearing to the proposals which Lord Lansdowne desired to recommend, because no projects of improvement, where no injury could arise from the experiment, should be lightly discarded, he owned that nothing would alarm him so much as a disposition on the part of the Legislature to meddle with these subjects on insufficient grounds; a continual tampering with great questions, a change of regulation session after session in order to comply with the temporary emergency, partial interests, or unreasonable clamour." He summed up the views and intentions of his Government on

the subject in these words: "I firmly believe that on all commercial subjects the fewer laws the better. I am sorry to see so many on our statute book ; but the evil is not one of easy remedy. Some of these laws may perhaps be advantageously removed, and others may be altered and amended, but the undertaking is one that will be attended with difficulty, and which must be conducted with the greatest caution. In commerce, as in the ordinary relations of life, knowledge and confidence derived from previous certainty are the most advantageous guides ; for whenever evils or inconveniences are ascertained they may be met, and perhaps successfully combated. Experience proves that property and trade will adapt themselves, in time, even to mistaken and defective laws ; but constant fluctuations in our legislation on such subjects can only be productive of disorder and ruin. If every year there is to be a change in our commercial laws, no man or body of men can know on what they are to rely."

I have quoted these last sentences because their truth is not confined to matters of commerce, but they are universally applicable, as the maxims should be of any one who aspires to the name of statesman. But it will be seen that the enunciation of the principles of free trade in the earlier portions of the speech are even more creditable to Lord Liverpool's sagacity, and give him a greater claim to be considered in advance of his day on such subjects, if we recollect that, with the exception of Pitt, he was the first responsible minister who had ever advanced them ; and that they were not shared, or in a very limited degree, by the Opposition. They were certainly not admitted by Lord Lansdowne, who, in his speech on this very occasion, had declared that "he saw no objection to protecting duties." Some years indeed elapsed before any extensive application of the principles thus announced by Lord Liverpool could be adopted : but he is fairly entitled to the credit of having in this and some other speeches laid the foundation for their gradual adoption.

Of letters written or received during this period unconnected with the personal affairs of the Royal Family, there are but few worth preserving. During the agitation consequent on the discovery of Thistlewood's conspiracy the ministers were all in London, so that no correspondence passed between them on the subject. But there are two which will probably be read with as much surprise as interest. It has not generally been the fashion to give George IV. credit for the conscientious good-feeling which is displayed in the first. And perhaps of the outer world still fewer believe how little is either the pleasure or the advantage which a minister derives from the patronage of which he is the dispenser. The perfect and disinterested integrity which guided Lord Liverpool himself in the distribution of Church preferment was universally acknowledged in his own day, but should not be forgotten by those of a later generation.

Carlton House,

*Most secret and confidential.* Thursday night, 12.30, May 16, 1822.

DEAR LORD LIVERPOOL,

I have been thinking very seriously on the subject relative to the Primate of Ireland, and I cannot make up my mind that either you or the Lord Lieutenant are right in the conclusion which you both seem disposed to come to as to the individual to be exalted to *that sacred* station.

I am too far advanced in life not to give subjects of this description the most serious and attentive consideration. It is, alas ! but too true that policy is too often obliged to interfere with our best intentions ; but I do think, where the head of the Church is concerned, especially at such a moment, we ought alone to be influenced by religious duty. Do not be surprised at this scrupulous language, for I am quite sincere. I think that you would do well to inquire of the Archbishop of Canterbury if no English bishop on the bench can be found fitting and suitable for such an important trust ; and if not, if no dignitary of the Church in this country can be selected for that purpose, (for you will remember that Dr. Howley was *most justly* at once made Bishop of London,) let us have piety and



learning if possible. Besides, I do not like, I cannot reconcile myself to have the Primacy of Ireland filled by an Irishman, for let us not forget the particular circumstances in which we are at present placed. I have no confidence in Lord Wellesley's opinion upon this subject. I shall say no more, but I desire you to give this your deliberate consideration.

Believe me your sincere friend,

G. R.

Fife House, 17th April, 1820.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have received your letter of the 11th inst., and I must begin with assuring you that you are quite mistaken in supposing that I ever recommended you to the Prince Regent for the bishopric of Oxford.

The ground of this misapprehension must have been my having stated to you in a letter of the 4th of November, 1815, that I had laid your letter before his Royal Highness; but this is what I make it a rule to do with respect to all important preferment in the Church, where the applications are not improper.

It would certainly give me peculiar pleasure and gratification to be able to meet your wishes, but I have never felt it consistent with my duty to allow personal considerations to interfere in promotion to the bench.

It has happened to me to be the instrument of making seven bishops. With no one of the individuals so made had I any connexion near or remote, and with some of them I was not even personally acquainted.

I have stated this for the purpose of showing that I have always considered the matter as of a public nature, and that neither my nearest relation nor the dearest friend I have in the world, if they were in the Church, could have any right to complain of me if they did not obtain this species of preferment.

It is distressing to me to be obliged to add anything to what I have already stated; but after the letter I have received from you on this subject, I should not deal candidly and fairly by you if I did not say that there are insurmountable difficulties, not arising I assure you from any want of personal disposition towards you on my part, in the way of your being promoted to the Episcopal Bench.

It has always been my intention, and it continues to be so, if the Deanery of Durham should become vacant during my administration, to recommend you for that situation. I could not of course answer for the result, but I have no reason to think it would not be successful; and after very full consideration, it appeared to me to be the only preferment which I could offer you, and which at the same time would be advantageous to you.

It is quite contrary to my usual rule ever to state eventual intentions, but I have departed from it in this case, in order that I might give you a proof that the course which I feel myself obliged to take cannot be ascribed to any want of personal feeling towards you.

I am, Sir, &c.

From LORD LIVERPOOL to DR. —.

LIVERPOOL.

We must now return to the other transactions to which allusion was made a few pages back. After the departure of the Princess of Wales from this country in 1814, no long time elapsed before reports reached those who were interested in obtaining information of her movements, that she was so far from having learnt decorum or prudence from the trials to which she had been exposed, that her conduct had been more unguarded than ever. She had raised an Italian, named Bergami, a courier in her service, to the office of her chamberlain; she had instituted an order of knighthood apparently for the sole purpose of investing him with its badges; she admitted him to her table and to the most close and political intimacy; and, unless the statements which came from many independent quarters were deliberately and wilfully false, the fact of her having admitted him to further familiarities inconsistent with her marriage vows was not one resting on mere suspicion. Some trustworthy agents<sup>1</sup> were de-

<sup>1</sup> The chief circumstances relating to the despatch of these agents, generally known as the Milan Commission, are stated in the following papers, one drawn by Lord Liverpool, the other by the Vice-Chancellor, Sir-J. Leach :

[General

spatched to Lombardy to investigate what foundation there was for these statements, on the spot where the

*General statement by Lord Liverpool.*

"After the Princess of Wales went abroad, in 1814, reports soon began to circulate of the impropriety of her conduct; but whatever communications may have passed between the Hanoverian ministers, the subject does not appear to have attracted the serious attention of the Prince Regent's Government, till the correspondence was received at the Admiralty which had passed between Lord Exmouth and Captain Pechell, relative to her Royal Highness's situation on board the *Clorinde*. This correspondence must have reached England in the spring of 1816. It first distinctly and authoritatively disclosed the fact of Bergami having been raised from the place of a menial servant waiting behind her chair, to the situation of her chamberlain and companion, decorated with honours.

"Lord Liverpool was so impressed with this circumstance, that he communicated a copy of the letter to the Princess Charlotte, who had intimated to him her wish that, if anything material ever came to his knowledge relative to the conduct of her mother, he would give her early information of it.

"Some time after the receipt of this information, accounts reached England of the conduct of the Princess of Wales whilst at different places in the Mediterranean; and likewise of the change of the cabins made by her directions when she was on board the *Leviathan*.

"In the spring of 1817, the deposition of Barbara Kress, which was taken in Germany, was transmitted to this country, and made considerable impression upon the minds of the King's servants.

"There followed afterwards a variety of other stories relative to the conduct of her Royal Highness towards Bergami, and which gave every reason to believe that there had for some time actually subsisted a criminal intercourse between them. The proposal of the Vice-Chancellor to send out commissioners from this country to procure evidence was made early in the summer of 1818. It was assented to by the Government, expressly upon the condition that, whatever might be the nature of the evidence obtained, however decisive as to criminality, the question of the expediency of any proceeding must always be considered as an open question, and as in no way decided by the establishment of the commission."

*Report by Sir J. Leach.*

"In the autumn of 1817 a large mass of papers, containing information from private and public sources with respect to the Queen, were, by command of his Majesty, then Prince Regent, laid before me to report thereon in my capacity of Chancellor to the Duchy of



transactions were said to have taken place, and the evidence of her actual criminality, which they collected, appeared

Cornwall, and, as such, the first law officer of the Prince Regent in his individual character.

"Until the delivery of these papers I was an utter stranger to the whole subject. A considerable part of these papers were delivered to me from the office of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

"My report upon these papers was to this effect: That, although the papers contained matter of grave and serious charge against the Queen, yet, considering the great importance of the subject, and the nature of the case, it appeared to me to be expedient that proper researches should be made in the countries where the Queen had resided, and through which she had travelled, for such further information as might exclude all doubt with respect to the character of her conduct.

"This report was submitted to the Cabinet, but the mission to Italy usually described as the Milan Commission, which followed upon this report, was not a Cabinet measure.

"The gentlemen employed upon this mission were selected by me in communication with the Lord Chancellor and Lord Liverpool, who approved of my selection. Lord Liverpool engaged that the expense of the mission should be provided for by the Government, and the mission was, by letters from the Office of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, placed in communication with the public authorities in the countries which they had occasion to visit.

"The object of this mission being to ascertain, with certainty, what the conduct of the Queen had been, and whether it were capable of clear and satisfactory proof, it was of the utmost importance that the gentlemen employed should be of a description to guard the King and the Government against the danger of being misled on those points.

"I explained to Mr. Cooke the high importance of the mission in this respect, and it was from that view of the subject he was induced to undertake it.

"I state, without the hazard of a question, that there is no member of the profession more eminently qualified than Mr. Cooke for the real object of the mission, nor more incapable of being the instrument of an unworthy purpose.

"The mission assembled at Milan in the month of September, 1818, and they transmitted to me, from time to time, copies of the evidence as they collected it; and these copies, as they were received, were regularly communicated to Lord Liverpool.

"The report of the mission was made on the 10th of July, 1819, and was immediately submitted to the Cabinet.

[ "It

so convincing to her husband the Prince Regent, that in the summer of 1819 he wrote, as has been already intimated, to Lord Liverpool on the subject, expressing his belief that the Princess herself would see the wisdom of submitting to a divorce, which, in that case, might be arranged without making the grounds of it public, rather than incur the exposure which must be the result of a formal investigation. Those English gentlemen and ladies who had been her attendants when she quitted the kingdom, had in most cases, if not in every instance, resigned their offices. But she had those in England who were still so far her friends that they were earnest advisers of the course which they thought best for her, whether as a woman or as a princess who must soon rise to still higher rank. The ablest of them was Mr. Brougham, who as a lawyer was in great practice, and had a seat in the House of Commons as member for Winchelsea. As soon as she became Queen she gave him the formal appointment of her Attorney-General, and by the party violence of the next year he was constantly attacked as having stimulated her to the rejection of all terms of compromise.<sup>1</sup> But the imputation was wholly

“It has been confidently asserted that I went myself to Milan in prosecution of the enquiry into the Queen’s conduct: this assertion is utterly false. I am in the habit of making excursions to the Continent, and, in the summer of 1818, in company with two private friends, I made a rapid tour through the whole of the north, and a part of the south of Italy, returning by the Tyrol, and being, upon the whole, absent from Dover three days less than eight weeks.

“I visited Milan as I visited Florence. I was not at Milan eight and forty hours, and neither there nor elsewhere on the Continent did I communicate with a single person upon the subject of the Queen.

“The mission was appointed before I quitted England, but did not assemble at Milan until about a month after I left it.

“JOHN LEACH.”

<sup>1</sup> The cleverest of the many squibs that were provoked by the events of 1820, “Tentamen,” speaking of the Queen under the disguise of Whittington’s Cat, Whittington, as an alderman and “feu Lord

undeserved. It is now clear that in all the advice which he pressed on the lady whom we may already term his client, his motives were as disinterested as his advice was judicious for all parties: not less for herself than for the nation, which could not be denied to have a direct interest in the character of its princesses. The investigation which had been instituted could be no secret, nor was it possible to doubt that it was designed to found ulterior proceedings on the information which it had elicited; and Mr. Brougham, meditating, as was natural, on the probable character of that information and of those proceedings, took upon himself to volunteer the advice contained in the following letter which he addressed to Lord Hutchinson, with the intention that it should be laid before the Princess: Lord Hutchinson had formerly been an active friend of her Royal Highness, and, being now high in the confidence of the Regent also, willingly offered his services to prevent the public scandal which was inevitable unless some amicable arrangement could be made.

London, June 14th, 1819.

In the expectation that proceedings are to be instituted which may call the attention of Parliament to questions concerning the Princess of Wales, and with a view of avoiding the consequences, unpleasant to all parties and hurtful to the country, which may arise from the renewal of such discussions, I am desirous of stating, through your Lordship, that upon a mature

Maire," being a foreshadowing of Alderman Wood, thus points the accusation against Mr. Brougham:

"A conynge monkey of ye law,  
As by ye fire he satte,  
To pick his nuts out used ye paw  
Of Whittingtone his catte.

"But Whittingtone discovered plaine  
What this vile ape was atte :  
Who failed thus his nuts to gaine,  
And only singed ye catte."

consideration of the whole subject I am disposed to advise the Princess to accede to an arrangement grounded on some such basis as the following : That she shall agree to a formal separation, to be ratified by Act of Parliament, if such a proceeding can be accomplished ; that she shall renounce the right to be crowned in the event of a demise of the Crown, and shall from thenceforth take some other style and title, as that of Duchess of Cornwall ; that she shall renounce the jointure to which she is entitled in the event of her surviving the Prince Regent, and that her present annuity shall be granted for her life instead of ceasing on the demise of the Crown. My firm belief is that, although the Princess can have nothing to dread from the result of any proceedings, she will be more comfortable after such an arrangement, since the Princess Charlotte's death has in all probability removed any desire of returning to England ; and I am quite sure that if it prevents the manifold evils of a public enquiry into the most delicate matters connected with the royal family, it will be highly beneficial to the country.

I remain, &c.

H. BROUGHAM.

*From MR. BROUGHAM to LORD HUTCHINSON.*

Worded as the above letter is with the most careful consideration for his client's delicacy, the fact of his having tendered such advice is in itself a sufficient proof of his opinion of her conduct.<sup>1</sup> But the arrangement which he thus proposed fell far short of the Prince's wishes. He desired to be free to marry again. And therefore, two days after the date of Brougham's note, he again pressed

<sup>1</sup> If the accuracy of Mr. Ward (*Memoirs of the Political and Literary Life of R. Plumer Ward*, ii. 60) may be trusted, Mr. Brougham gradually changed his opinion on this delicate subject. "*October 17th, 1820.*—I asked what he" (James M'Donald) "thought of Brougham's own opinion of the facts? He said he would tell me what he had said (I think) two evenings before. At first he did not think it possible that she *could* be innocent. But the more the case had opened, the more had her innocence appeared ; and now, in his conscience, he believed her guiltless."

on the ministers his desire for a divorce. They drew up a brief Cabinet minute as a reply; and when he had commented on it in terms which scarcely disguised a deep feeling of displeasure at hesitation which he looked upon as incompatible with the consideration which his ministers ought to entertain for his personal feelings, they (having in the meantime examined the evidence on which the Prince relied as justifying his demand) explained their reasons at greater length in a second paper:

*Copy of Minute of Cabinet.*

June 17th, 1819.

Your Royal Highness's confidential servants having fully considered the paper which your Royal Highness has been graciously pleased to refer to them, beg leave humbly to submit it as their opinion that it appears to them to be quite clear that a divorce between your Royal Highness and the Princess of Wales never could be accomplished by arrangement, nor obtained except upon proof of adultery, to be substantiated by evidence before some tribunal in this country; and such a proceeding could not, in the judgment of your Royal Highness's servants, be instituted without serious hazard to the interests and peace of the kingdom.

On the other hand, the separation which already exists between your Royal Highness and the Princess of Wales might be rendered complete, the scandal in the eyes of Europe effectually removed, and other eventual inconveniences obviated, by some arrangement upon the principles suggested in the paper referred to by them. But your Royal Highness's servants cannot advise your Royal Highness to entertain such an arrangement unless the proposition, and the terms of it, were distinctly stated to originate on the part of the Princess of Wales, and to be sanctioned by her authority.

*Letter from the Prince Regent to the Earl of Liverpool.*

Carlton House,

*Most private and confidential.*

Tuesday night, June 22d, 1819.

The Prince Regent finds it necessary to remark upon the Minute of the Cabinet of the 17th inst. that his observation in the



note delivered to the Earl of Liverpool has been misunderstood.

In stating that it appeared to the Prince Regent that it might be useful to the public interests that the ultimate purpose of divorce should be effected rather by arrangement than by adverse proceeding, the Prince Regent was fully aware that the divorce never could be accomplished except upon satisfactory proof of adultery.

The Prince Regent, for the purpose of the communication in question, did assume (as the party from whom the communication proceeded might be inferred to have assumed) that the evidence collected would afford such satisfactory proof, and the Prince Regent considered that the offence to public decency and public morals which belonged to the nature of that evidence might more certainly be avoided if the ultimate purpose of divorce were submitted to by arrangement, than if the case were left exposed to the clamour of hostile feeling, however little supported by the public sentiment.

The commissioners employed to collect that evidence are in the course of preparing their report, and when such report is concluded, the Prince Regent will cause the same, together with the evidence annexed to it, to be laid before his confidential servants.

The Prince Regent will then have to call their attention to a vast mass of testimony collected under their own immediate sanction, with more than ordinary caution and ability, and which, in the opinion of those who have collected it, affords the clearest and most decisive proof of guilt.

The Prince Regent is sensible that the policy of any proceeding in the present case may be influenced by other considerations ; but it is obvious that the weight and character of the evidence are circumstances of the utmost importance with respect to the public feeling.

The Prince Regent, concurring in the opinion that a divorce could never be effected by arrangement without satisfactory proof of adultery, cannot but entertain great doubt whether the sort of separation referred to in the communication  
    <sup>1</sup>d be effected by arrangement without the same proof of

It is presumed that without proof of crime the Legislature could not be brought to deprive the Princess of Wales of her high station, and of the rights, present and future, which may belong to it. But the sort of separation referred to does deprive the Princess of Wales of that station, and of all its rights present and future. It is equally irreconcilable with the notion of innocence ; and as to her, it differs only from divorce in maintaining a fetter which can be of no advantage to her, and which is not likely to be sought by her.

The Prince Regent therefore desires that it may be well considered whether, for the purpose of arrangement, there is any essential difference between divorce and the sort of separation referred to, and whether the party who would propose the one would not accept the other, and whether the aiming at separation instead of divorce would not be an unnecessary sacrifice of important public interests, as well as of the personal feelings of the Prince Regent.

*Copy of a Second Minute of Cabinet.*

July 24th, 1820.

Your Royal Highness's confidential servants have attentively considered the several papers your Royal Highness has been graciously pleased to refer to them, relative to the conduct of her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales.

Your Royal Highness's servants thought it their duty in the first instance to desire the opinion of the King's Advocate, and of his Majesty's Attorney and Solicitor-General, on several points arising out of the information contained in these papers, and they have annexed copies of the questions so put, and of the answers which have been returned to them.

According to these opinions your Royal Highness's servants are led to believe that the facts stated in the papers which have been referred to them would furnish sufficient proof of the crime of adultery, provided they were established by credible witnesses ; but it is at the same time the opinion of your Royal Highness's confidential servants, in which they are supported by what has passed in personal communication with the law officers of the Crown, that, considering the manner in which a great part of this testimony has unavoidably been obtained,

and the circumstance that the persons who have afforded it are foreigners, many of whom appear to be in a low station of life, it would not be possible to advise your Royal Highness to institute any legal proceeding upon such evidence, without further enquiry as to the characters and circumstances of the witnesses by whom it is to be supported; and it is further material to observe, that the law officers are of opinion that the papers do not furnish the means of stating in a proceeding in the Ecclesiastical courts, with the proper precision and accuracy, the facts to which those papers relate.

In considering the expediency of authorising such further enquiry as to the nature of the evidence which has been adduced in the papers before them, your Royal Highness's confidential servants have directed their attention to the several proceedings which it might be possible to advise your Royal Highness to institute upon the ground of such evidence.

First, A proceeding on the part of your Royal Highness against the Princess in the Ecclesiastical courts, according to the law and usage of those courts.

Secondly, A direct application in the first instance to Parliament for relief upon the special circumstances of the case.

Thirdly, A proceeding against the Princess for high treason.

With respect to the first of the proceedings, though your confidential servants have every reason to believe, according to the opinion annexed, that it is one that might be legally entertained, they cannot avoid observing that there exists no precedent of such a proceeding; that it would therefore be regarded as altogether extraordinary; and that when they advert to the nature of the defence which might be set up against it; to the many obstructions which it is admitted might be interposed in every stage of the business; to the interval of years which might elapse between the first step in the proceeding, and the conclusion of it; and to the agitation of the public feelings upon the most delicate questions during that interval; they feel it to be their duty humbly to submit to your Royal Highness their decided opinion against the expediency of this course of proceeding.

With regard to the second proposition, a direct application to Parliament, the difficulties in the way of a proceeding of this

description will naturally have presented themselves to your Royal Highness's mind.

A legislative proceeding upon a judicial case which does not rest in the first instance upon the judgment of some regular and competent tribunal, must be in principle liable to very serious objections.

Your confidential servants are not prepared to say that no case could exist which would warrant such a proceeding, but they are satisfied that evidence which in a common case, and before the ordinary tribunals, would be deemed fully sufficient to establish the fact of adultery, would, in a proceeding of this kind, be received with the greatest suspicion, particularly where the witnesses happened to be foreigners; and they doubt the success of any application to Parliament upon such a transaction, except in a case in which the testimony was so unexceptionable, clear, and distinct, as to be subject to no reasonable doubt.

Most of the objections above stated would not apply to the third proposition; a proceeding for high treason.

Such a proceeding would be considered as conformable to the due course of law. But on the other hand, it must be observed that the difficulties of obtaining sufficient evidence of the crime of high treason are greater than in any other criminal proceeding, and it would certainly not be advisable to institute it, if there did not exist the highest probability of success. Upon the whole of this question your Royal Highness's confidential servants beg leave most humbly to state their opinion as decidedly adverse to any proceeding being attempted in the Ecclesiastical courts.

With respect to the expediency of authorising any person or persons at this time to make further inquiries into the validity of the testimony already had, as a ground for a proceeding under either of the two last heads; your Royal Highness's servants humbly submit, that as the existence of some enquiry upon this subject is now generally known, as the Princess of Wales and her advisers will therefore be on their guard, and as the result therefore of any further investigation at this time must be very doubtful, it appears to them to be more prudent to abstain from taking any further step in this business under

all the present circumstances; your Royal Highness reserving to yourself the full discretion of pursuing this investigation further, if fresh information, or other circumstances should render it expedient.

Your Royal Highness's servants are the more deeply impressed with this opinion, from the consideration of the advantageous ground on which your Royal Highness now stands in the eyes of this country and of Europe upon the whole of this business, and of the inconvenience and evil effects which might be the consequence of any proceeding against the Princess which in its result should prove abortive.

The Princess herself was as intractable as her husband. She was additionally irritated by delays in the payment of some money which she claimed under the will of her brother the Duke of Brunswick. And the last Cabinet minute had scarcely been submitted to the Prince when Lord Liverpool received an angry letter from her announcing her intention of instantly repairing to England. She announced her resolution to Mr. Brougham also in terms of reliance on his judgment which he described as "most confidential, and even submissive." But he cared more for her acts than for her courteous language; as he wrote to Lord Hutchinson, he thought that her arrival "would expose things to the risk of clamour and violence which no one could hope to estimate, far less to direct, or in case of necessity, disarm. The question, both before being brought on and after, could not be considered with even tolerable coolness and fairness were she in England." And under the influence of this feeling he remonstrated with such energy against her crossing the Channel that for a time he prevailed. But in the winter the news of the rapidity with which the King seemed to be decaying revived her purpose. The following is an extract from a letter which she wrote to Mr. Brougham from Marseilles in December. "By the newspapers I have been informed that our dear old King is very ill: of course, if it should be his lot to follow his ancestors I think I could not



remain in France, having yet not received any mark of attention from that court. I would probably return to Italy: the whole aspect for me would then change. If the *country* would protect me I certainly would fly to England, but upon an uncertainty I would prefer to remain in obscurity and tranquillity without ambition the few years I am to remain upon this wild globe. You have not yet given any answer relative to the conduct of the English ambassador at Paris; you must believe it would be impossible for me to venture to go there without being well informed how I would be received, though I would still keep my perfect incognito at Paris."

The uncertainty as to the treatment which she might receive on her road was, of course, an additional source of irritation to the Princess; but she returned to Italy, and everything was quiet for a month or two till the death of George III., which, by the alterations in the different passages in which the Royal Family is mentioned in the Liturgy which had become requisite, compelled the ministers to form an instant decision as to the manner in which the Queen's name was to be dealt with. The illness of the new King which has already been mentioned enabled them to give a longer consideration to the question than would otherwise have been practicable. It was the subject of several councils, and, as soon as his Majesty was sufficiently recovered to attend to business, they laid their opinion on the whole subject before him in an elaborate minute. They adopted without hesitation, (though Canning, as will be seen, made his approval contingent on the abstinence from any penal measure), what they knew to be the wishes of their Royal Master on the question of the Liturgy, and resolved to advise him not to insert the Queen's name in the prayers for the Royal Family. But on the more important point of a divorce which should set him free to marry again, their opinion as to what was either desirable or possible was still most unfavorable to his wishes. He expressed the utmost displeasure,

threatening even to dismiss them from their offices.<sup>1</sup> And a day or two afterwards he embodied his reasons for disputing the soundness of their judgment in a paper as

<sup>1</sup> Lord Castlereagh, in an account of the whole discussion which he wrote to his brother (Castlereagh Despatches, xii. 210) represents the threat as contained in the King's paper. But, as will be presently seen, no such menace is contained in it. So that it was probably uttered in the long conference that took place, when the Cabinet minute was delivered. Lord Castlereagh adds that he also expressed his determination, if he could not form a Government which would relieve him to the extent of the divorce, to retire to Hanover: a design which, in the early part of his reign, his father had announced; and which had furnished the son with a subject for frequent, though not very well-judged, pleasantry. A letter from Lord Eldon to Lord Liverpool alludes to the same scheme, explaining its reason, that in Hanover he would be able to ensure a divorce; and also shows the degree in which the Vice-Chancellor (Sir J. Leach) encouraged his displeasure against his ministers:

*"Most confidential."*

Westminster Hall, 10 o'clock.

"MY DEAR LORD,

"The Vice-Chancellor has just left me. He informed me that he was with the King more than three hours yesterday. He appointed him to come to him to-day at four, as he was, at three, to receive a communication from his Government. He, the Vice-Chancellor, expressed himself anxious to see me this morning, stating to me the King's determination, expressed to him in such a way as to leave to him no reason to doubt that he was determined, to part with his Government if the communication was not what he was entitled to expect. That, as I *understood*, was D——e; and that, if he could not carry this point, I *presume* with other servants, he was determined to go to, and live in, Hanover, where of course he could be divorced.

"The Vice-Chancellor's conversation expressed everything that bespoke his own decided opinion, and his belief of the general concurrence in that opinion, that what the King looked to was quite reasonable and quite attainable. And he seems to have thought it material to press upon us a full consideration of the subject, not only on the King's account, and the agitated state of his mind, and the state of his health, but on account of the confusion, &c. in which the country would be placed by what he seemed to think absolutely certain, the change of the Government.

"Yours,

"ELDON.

"I kept silence, save in stating that no subject had, within my experience, ever undergone so much, so anxious, and so full consideration: contenting myself with general expressions to that effect."

carefully drawn as their own. It was obvious that he could not resist the conviction that, if made the subject of a public criminal proceeding, the Queen would insist on recriminating, and he tried to suggest a variety of expedients, which could hardly have satisfied himself; going the length of even proposing that the Lords should sit in a committee of the whole House, conducting the necessary investigation with closed doors. The sum of his letter amounted to this, that he was prepared to encounter everything, to risk everything, to sacrifice everything, if only he could obtain his release. The ministers were firm: in another minute they recapitulated their objections to any attempt to 'do more than establish a perpetual separation, to which they approved of adding a stipulation that should bind the Queen to remain out of England. They admitted their object, as one of vital importance to the well-being of the nation, to be to prevent the scandalous disclosures which must be the consequence of any penal measure; and this they believed to be a very general feeling. But, while they thus steadily adhered to their original recommendations to endeavour to induce the Queen to accept of such a compromise of her increased rank as should put her in possession of an augmented income, and leave her uncontrolled freedom, limited only by the stipulation that she should abstain from visiting England, they did not exclude from their contemplation the possibility that she might presume on her new dignity, and on the increased power of annoyance which it gave her, too much to agree to compromise or conditions of any kind. And in that event they held out a hope to their Sovereign that they might perhaps find their notions of their duty correspond to his wishes.

*Minute of Cabinet.*

10th February, 1820.

In laying before your Majesty the result of their deliberations upon the most delicate and most distressing subject upon which they have ever been called upon to tender their advice,



your Majesty's confidential servants most humbly entreat your Majesty to believe that they entered upon those deliberations with the deepest sense of what is due to your Majesty's personal feelings, no less than to the honour of your Crown and to the welfare of your kingdom.

Their opinion has been formed with a view to all these considerations, and they beg leave individually, as well as collectively, to assure your Majesty, that they have examined every part and bearing of this afflicting and perplexing case, and have weighed every sentence of their minute with that scrupulous solicitude which was alike demanded by the magnitude of the question referred to them, and by the sincere and affectionate attachment which they bear to the person of your Majesty.

As often as the conduct of the Princess of Wales was brought under the consideration of your Majesty's confidential servants, before the death of his late Majesty, there naturally occurred, as a part of that consideration, the question whether it was not, upon the whole, most expedient to abstain from any public proceeding whatever.

Such proceeding, in any shape, would in that case have been a voluntary act, and it might, therefore, have been reasonably doubted whether it was advisable to incur the hazard of those public evils which might probably arise out of it. The question is now materially changed in consequence of the accession of your Majesty.

Some alteration in the Liturgy is become indispensably necessary. The provision granted to the Princess of Wales in 1814 has expired, and it may be assumed that a proceeding must take place in Parliament for settling her situation. Proceedings relative to her Royal Highness, both on the part of the Crown in the exercise of its prerogative and on the part of Parliament, are now therefore not matters of choice, but of necessity.

Your Majesty's confidential servants have most seriously and attentively considered the papers which have been laid before them respecting the conduct of the Princess of Wales, together with the opinions of the law officers of the Crown, and of those of the Duchy of Cornwall, and with the former minutes of Cabinet which have been submitted to your Majesty upon this subject.

It appears, by the opinions to which they have above referred,

that there are difficulties in point of law, in this case, which may be considered decisive as to any proceeding against the Princess for high treason.

They think it material to advert, in the first instance, to the effect of this opinion; for though a prosecution of the Princess for high treason would, in the judgment of some, be subject to insurmountable objections, independent of the special difficulties of the case and of those which always attend the legal proof of this particular crime; yet, on the other hand, assuming the evidence collected to be sufficient, there would have been this advantage incident to a proceeding for high treason, that the case would have rested upon a simple fact, to be tried by due course of law; that the sole question would have been whether the fact itself was proved, or could be controverted; and that the accused would have had no right to recriminate, or to justify her conduct by any circumstances which were not immediately connected with the fact itself.

A proceeding for high treason being thus out of the question, there remain only the following courses to be adopted.

That of divorce by act of Parliament, or that of separation under different modifications, by the same authority.

Upon the measure of divorce the following observations are most humbly submitted.

1. It is the established practice of Parliament not to entertain a bill of divorce without the proceedings and judgment of the Ecclesiastical Court being laid before them, and without a record of a verdict of damages in a court of common law in all cases where it can be obtained.

Divorce bills rest, therefore, on some previous judicial decision.

A verdict for damages, from the nature of the present case, could not be contemplated; and any attempt to institute proceedings in the Ecclesiastical Courts has for many reasons been pronounced highly inexpedient.

To introduce into Parliament a measure of this importance, in a mode entirely unusual, without any previous judicial decision, would be an undertaking of no light moment; and there are persons who entertain doubts arising from religious scruples, whether any divorce, *à vinculo matrimonii*, would be valid, unless supported by the authority of some ecclesiastical jurisdiction.

Whatever may be the value of such doubts, the very existence of them is not to be overlooked.

2. It is further submitted that any private individual circumstanced in his domestic relations as your Majesty has been with respect to the Princess, as to separation, correspondence, and other particulars, could not expect to obtain a divorce, according to the established usage of Parliament in bills of this nature.

It is undoubtedly true that the station of the sovereign constitutes a material difference between his case and that of a private individual; but it results from this very difference, that while the comments to which an application from an individual, under such circumstances, would be liable, could affect only himself, in the case of a sovereign they might produce consequences highly injurious to the most essential public interests.

3. It is still doubted whether the evidence which has been collected in this case could be completely relied on, as sufficient to prove the crime of adultery before Parliament, or any other tribunal.

This evidence would indeed establish the fact, if not rebutted or discredited; but notwithstanding the supplementary evidence which has since been obtained, your servants must beg to refer to the opinion which they gave in their minute of the 24th of July last, "that this body of testimony consists almost exclusively of the evidence of foreigners, most of them not above the rank of menial servants, or that of masters and attendants in hotels, wholly unacquainted with the English language, and some of the former class standing in the questionable situation of having been dismissed or removed from her Royal Highness's service."

Your servants are not insensible to the obstacles which may have arisen to any attempt, made according to their advice, to ascertain what was likely to be the evidence of the several English persons of both sexes who had been living in the family of the Princess of Wales. But to proceed in ignorance as to the probable effect of such testimony would, they submit, be hazardous; particularly as your servants have reason to believe, that some of those persons of rank and station are at present in friendly correspondence with the Princess, profess

an interest in all that concerns her, and would therefore come before any tribunal with a strong bias in her favour.

4. The law officers of the Crown and of the Duchy of Cornwall have given it as their opinion (an opinion in which your Majesty's servants entirely concur), that in the proceedings upon a bill of divorce, not only must "the evidence to make out the charge be strictly examined," but "an opportunity must be given to the Princess of controverting that evidence, and establishing her innocence."

In opposition to a measure of divorce, there can be little doubt but that her Royal Highness would offer to state not only matter of recrimination, but every circumstance which she might be disposed or advised to represent as neglect or ill-usage, even from the time of her coming to this country.

In any private case such evidence would be admitted as of course; and although it might be contended that the public character of this transaction should induce Parliament to reject evidence of recrimination as a bar to divorce, yet it is impossible that they should refuse to hear such evidence, as well as that of alleged neglect and ill-usage, when offered in palliation and extenuation, or to consider it, whenever the situation and provision of the Princess of Wales in consequence of divorce comes to be settled by law.

5. The proceeding upon a divorce bill must take place at the bar of the two Houses of Parliament, and must be public.

It seems scarcely necessary, therefore, to say that any idea of precluding a public proceeding by the authority of a secret committee must be entirely abandoned.

Your Majesty's confidential servants are of opinion that such a proceeding by a secret committee, which would amount substantially to a secret trial, would be revolting to the feelings of all your subjects, and never could be adopted by Parliament; and they deem it to be their indispensable duty most humbly but most earnestly to impress upon your Majesty's mind the effect which the publicity of such proceedings must have on public morals.

They beg leave further to submit, that however it might be attempted to confine this investigation, and the discussions growing out of it, to the conduct of the Princess of Wales

since she left England in 1814, the defence of the Princess would not be confined to that period.

The opportunity would be eagerly seized of bringing forward, with every degree of exaggeration, and in the most invidious colours, any circumstance, at whatever time it may have occurred, which could in any way be brought to bear on this subject. Even if it were possible to reject such matters as evidence when offered at the bar of Parliament, it would be obviously impossible to prevent their being introduced in speeches, motions, and petitions, and producing perhaps a still more injurious effect upon the public mind, because no opportunity would be afforded of contradicting or answering them.

Your Majesty's servants entreat your Majesty to reflect that success in a proceeding for divorce, even if success could be confidently anticipated, might be purchased with so much personal discomfort to your Majesty, as would more than outweigh any advantages which your Majesty could expect to derive from it; but that a failure must be followed, not only by the hostile and triumphant establishment in this country of one who would in that event be represented as the intended victim of persecution, but by other consequences which your Majesty's confidential advisers could not contemplate without the utmost alarm.

Under these circumstances, being deeply impressed with the conviction that the measure of divorce, if proposed voluntarily and without necessity on the part of your Majesty, might seriously prejudice the interests of your Majesty and of the monarchy, your Majesty's confidential servants cannot feel it consistent with their duty to recommend the originating of that measure.

But though your Majesty's servants for the reasons above stated deprecate the measure of divorce, they conceive that there can be no difficulty which may not be overcome in securing your Majesty against the invasion of your dignity and comfort by the return of the Princess to England.

The notoriety of what have been, and still are, the situation and conduct of the Princess of Wales upon the Continent, and the scandal thereby created throughout Europe, would (as your Majesty's servants hope and believe) induce Parliament to give a ready consent to any measure which, while it afforded



to your Majesty this essential security, should be calculated at the same time to avoid discussions and disclosures offensive to public decency and likely to disturb the peace of the country. And your servants are of opinion that the facility of passing such a measure would be the greater in proportion as it was divested of that penal character which must render such disclosures and discussions unavoidable.

By the expiration of the Act of the 54th of his late Majesty, the Princess becomes dependent upon your Majesty and Parliament for a provision during your Majesty's life.

The separation which has so long subsisted between your Majesty and the Princess, the sanction of that separation by the late King, and the recognition of it by Parliament in the Act of the 54th of his late Majesty, together with the notoriety above stated, furnish, in the opinion of your Majesty's servants, sufficient grounds for your Majesty's recommending to Parliament, or (if this course should be less agreeable to your Majesty) for Parliament's originating a bill enabling your Majesty to make provision for her Royal Highness by an annuity "payable only during her continued residence abroad."

Upon the same grounds your Majesty would, in their opinion, be fully justified in withholding from the Princess those distinctions which it is in your Majesty's option to confer upon her, in directing that she should not be named in the Liturgy, and in refusing to her the honour of coronation.

The intercourse which took place with Mr. Brougham last summer affords just reason for believing that the Princess would be advised to acquiesce in an arrangement founded upon these principles.

Your Majesty's servants would, however, ill discharge their duty to your Majesty if they were to presume to hold out to your Majesty the assurance that all the evils to which they have adverted would certainly be avoided by the adoption of the qualified measure which they have ventured to propose.

From the nature of the case some measure must be taken; but the choice between different measures is also, from the nature of the case, a choice between difficulties.

They are, however, unanimously and decidedly of opinion that, by the course which they humbly recommend, the risk of

hostile discussions would be in a great measure diminished, and that the mischief resulting from them, if they should unfortunately arise, would in a still greater degree be alleviated.

If the Princess and her advisers should force enquiry, the act would be theirs ; the agitation of all the delicate questions connected with this subject would be ascribed to them ; the evidence of which your Majesty is in possession would be received with very different impressions if produced at their call ; and it would then be open to your Majesty and your Government to take such other course of proceeding as the new circumstances of the case might render advisable.

Your Majesty's servants cannot conclude without again imploring your Majesty's indulgent construction of anything which they may appear to your Majesty to have said amiss in explaining, justifying, and enforcing the opinions which it has been incumbent upon them to submit to your Majesty. It would have been matter of the deepest regret to your Majesty's servants if, in coming to this decision, they had found themselves under the painful obligation of postponing their regard for your Majesty's feelings to great public interests.

It is therefore an inexpressible consolation to them that, in the discharge of their duty on this occasion, they have not had to separate considerations so intimately blended, but that the same decision which appears to them the least likely to unsettle and agitate the public mind at the commencement of your Majesty's reign, is at the same time that which they conscientiously believe to be most conducive to your Majesty's dignity and peace of mind.

One minister, Canning, who separated himself from his colleagues in their subsequent conduct of the transaction, declined making himself a party to this minute without appending to it an explanation of the conditions under which he acceded to it ; announcing that, in his eyes, the omission from the Liturgy of the name of the Princess, as she was most inconsistently styled, did, on every principle of justice, necessitate the abandonment of every idea of instituting legal proceedings against her. Perhaps a more singular proof of the complicated difficulties which

surrounded the whole transaction can hardly be found than in the circumstance that men of such extreme clearness and precision of intellect as Lord Liverpool and himself as yet overlooked the absurdity of still calling the lady in question Princess of Wales; since, though it certainly had, as we have seen, been proposed by Mr. Brougham that she should forbear to assume the title of Queen, nothing could be plainer than that it had become her only proper appellation; and that, at all events, as her husband had ceased to be Prince of Wales, she could by no possibility be Princess.

MR. CANNING'S *separate Minute*.

February 10th, 1820.

I concur entirely in the minute of Cabinet of this day *as a whole*. As a part of that whole, I agree to the proposed alteration in the Liturgy. It is strictly conformable to the situation in which the royal person in question will necessarily stand when the complete separation, to which our minute is directed, shall have been carried into effect.

But I could not have agreed to the omission of her name if any *penal* process of whatever kind had been in contemplation. In that case I think the person to be accused could not, without injustice, have been divested before trial of any of the privileges of her present station.

GEORGE CANNING.

It was plain that, in presenting this explanation of his own opinion, Canning's principal object was to give notice that if, as one of the last paragraphs of the Cabinet minute contemplated, any perverseness of "the Princess and her advisers" should lead his colleagues to decide on "such other course of proceeding as the new circumstances of the case might render advisable," or, in plainer words, on instituting a legal or Parliamentary investigation of her conduct, he should absolutely refuse all participation in such a measure. And it was in the light of such a protest that Lord Liverpool regarded it. The King, how-

ever, at the time took no notice of the additional earnestness with which Canning thus clothed his remonstrance against "any penal process." He was too much disconcerted by and too indignant at the resistance made to his wishes by the whole Cabinet collectively to have leisure for nice distinctions; and, with as little delay as possible, returned Lord Liverpool in reply the following comment on his minute, which, though written with his own hand, was probably drawn up by the Vice-Chancellor, Sir J. Leach :

Carlton House, February 12th, 1820.

The King has perused the Minute of Cabinet of the 10th of February with some surprise and much regret.

The King cannot satisfy himself that any objection arises to the measure of divorce by Act of Parliament from the ordinary usage of Parliament not to entertain bills of divorce without a previous sentence in an ecclesiastical court, and a verdict of damages in a court of law.

Where an individual seeks the aid of Parliament for the redress of his private injury, it is reasonable to require that he should first establish the fact of injury in the proper tribunals of the country; but this principle can have no application to a case where the remedy is sought upon the grounds of public mischief.

The King cannot concur in the doubts arising from religious scruples, "whether any divorce *à vinculo matrimonii* would be valid unless supported by the authority of some ecclesiastical jurisdiction."

The King has been informed that in the English law marriage is a civil contract; that the sentence of the ecclesiastical court does not profess to give the sanction of religion to the separation of man and wife, but it is merely an adjudication that the misconduct of one of the contracting parties has forfeited the claim to the civil rights arising out of that contract.

The King understands that it is not to be doubted that the statements made by the witnesses, if true, in fact amount to decisive evidence of criminality; and that these statements are true in fact has been forced upon the mind of the King,



from the extraordinary coincidence of the testimony of different witnesses, who have been separated from each other for years, and have been in no habits of connexion or communication.

It is true that some of these witnesses are exposed to observation, as having been discarded servants; and that it may be said of most of the others that they are foreigners. But these observations lose their force where the whole evidence is consistent, where the nature of the facts does not admit of other testimony; where the person who principally examined the witnesses is of great legal experience, and conducted the examination with the utmost caution, and uniformly rejected all testimony which was rendered suspicious, either by the manner or character of the party tendered as a witness; and where the general tendency of the evidence is confirmed by several English persons who had the opportunity of witnessing some facts.

The King cannot apprehend any hazard from proceeding in ignorance of the testimony of the several English persons who were living in the family of the Princess of Wales. It is notorious that nearly all of these persons left the service of the Princess in disgust, and that fact is in itself evidence of some impropriety in the conduct of the Princess; and if they cannot or will not speak to direct criminality, it is not to be believed that they can disaffirm that sort of general conduct which squares with and confirms the more particular testimony of the other witnesses.

If, in the proceedings for a divorce, all attempts at recrimination were excluded by reason of the public character of the transaction, and the divorce received the sanction of Parliament, the King is confident that the integrity and good sense of Parliament would protect the public interests from any renewed attempt at recrimination, when the question merely turned upon the extent of the provision to be made for the divorced person.

The King is desirous that the proceeding should be such as to afford to the Princess full opportunity for defence.

The King imagines, that from the judicial character of the House of Lords, and its power of examining upon oath, the proceeding would commence there; and the King was led to believe that the forms of the House of Lords permitted a committee of the whole House to sit with closed doors, so as



at least to prevent the publication of testimony there until the case was gone through.

The King would be highly gratified if it were possible to avoid the publicity of such proceedings; but from the sense which he has of the great public interest of this measure, he cannot admit that the unfortunate moral effect of the disclosure of the depravity in this case ought to lead to the impunity of crime.

If the nature of the proceeding left the Princess at liberty to attempt recrimination, then it is not likely she would confine herself within the period of her residence upon the Continent; but inasmuch as the principle of the proceeding renders such an attempt altogether irrelevant, and the right extends only to a defence against a charge of criminal conduct since she quitted England in 1814, the King does not apprehend that any prior matter can be introduced as bearing upon that subject. The King is fully sensible that it is not possible to restrain the malignant use of speeches, motions, and petitions, and the King has fully made up his mind to all the discomfort to which he can be exposed from those sources.

But if the proceeding in Parliament be conducted with that firmness and dignity which belong to the conscious discharge of a great public duty, the King trusts that such malignity may be checked by the decent expression of public opinion both in and out of Parliament; waiting upon the result of a judicial inquiry, in which every degree of fair attention is paid to the interest of the person accused.

The King cannot bring himself to reflect upon the consequences of failing in the measure of divorce, certain as he is of that conduct on the part of the Princess of Wales which renders such a measure of high national importance; and confident as he is of the weight of the testimony by which satisfaction in that respect is to be brought home to every mind. But if the King could concede the possibility of such a result, he could not shrink from the discharge of a duty essential to the interests of his foreign dominions, as well as to those of this country, to his family, and to the dignity of his own character.

The King cannot perceive the advantages of the qualified measure of a bill in Parliament to settle an annuity upon the Princess during her continued residence abroad. It is stated

that such a measure may be expected to be adopted by Parliament, and to be satisfactory to the public mind upon the fact of prior separation, and the general notoriety of misconduct. But if the public mind be already so possessed with the unfitness of the Princess to hold the royal dignity in England, that it may be expected that without any trial or opportunity for defence the public are prepared to banish her from the country, and leave her only the empty name of Queen; what apprehension can there be that the public opinion will not follow the measure of divorce; which, depriving her further only of the name of Queen, proceeds not upon mere general notoriety, but upon guilt, proved upon a fair trial, and after full opportunity of defence?

But why is it to be believed that such a measure, which is nothing short of a verdict of guilt, is to be submitted to by the Princess, without all the evils of public agitation, and all the attempts, both in Parliament and out of Parliament, at malignant recrimination, which are expected to attend the bill for divorce? Will the Princess be less active because she has more cause for complaint, and is to be condemned unheard?

If reliance is to be placed on the interference of Mr. Brougham, it cannot be expected that the Princess will now concede from the consciousness of guilt, and the desire of securing an income; but since in the case of a half-measure or of the whole measure she must equally lose all present consideration here, and has nothing to gain in foreign countries, it is hardly to be thought that if she will submit in one case, she will resist in the other, if it become unavoidable.

The King therefore altogether disapproves of the proposal of settling an annuity upon the Princess, payable only during her residence abroad; because it appears to the King to be exposed to every evil which is suggested as likely to attend the measure of divorce, and at the same time it neither vindicates the national honour abroad, secures tranquillity at home, nor protects the personal comfort of the King; but, waiving any present proceeding to establish the guilt of the Princess, and thus making such proceeding impossible in future, it leaves her at liberty to return to England with impunity (at the risk only of her pecuniary provision) for the purpose of entering into a

new contest to assert the rights of a Queen, whenever faction may offer to her a more favorable opportunity.

GEORGE R.

The ministers felt that they could only repeat their reasons for adhering to their decision :

*Minute of Cabind.*

14th February, 1820.

Your Majesty's confidential servants have considered with the most respectful attention the paper which your Majesty has been most graciously pleased to communicate to them ; and whilst they entreat your Majesty to believe that nothing can be further from their intention than to presume to enter into a controversial discussion with your Majesty, they request your Majesty's permission to advert shortly to some of the points stated in that paper, in order that there may not remain any misapprehension on any part of this distressing subject.

Your Majesty will permit them to observe that in their minute of the 10th instant, your servants did not bring forward each of the successive objections therein stated to the measure of divorce, as separately conclusive ; but that it is upon the combined operation of them all that they founded the advice which they have humbly submitted to your Majesty.

The distinction between the case of a sovereign and that of a private individual had not only not escaped their attention, but was one of the principal points to which it was directed.

They admitted that in the case of the sovereign a verdict for damages could not be contemplated.

They admitted that a proceeding in the Ecclesiastical Court would be in the highest degree inadvisable.

It followed that a bill of divorce, if introduced at all, must be introduced without these preliminaries, and consequently without any previous judicial decision ; and it appeared to them that a measure so unusual ought to be weighed with peculiar caution.

They did not indeed, in their last minute, recall to your Majesty's recollection (what they had stated on a former occasion) the reasons which rendered a proceeding in the Ecclesiastical Courts inadvisable ; particularly the length of time which such a proceeding would occupy, and the invariable practice

of those courts to admit recrimination of every kind ; but they thought it right to bring under your Majesty's view the religious scruples entertained by some persons respecting the validity of a divorce procured without ecclesiastical authority : which, however, they did not state as scruples entertained by themselves, but as those of which they knew the existence, and the very existence of which deserved serious consideration.

Marriage is undoubtedly a civil contract, but it is not a civil contract only. The information that your Majesty has received that "the sentence of the Ecclesiastical Court is merely an adjudication that the misconduct of one of the contracting parties has forfeited the claim to the civil rights arising out of that contract," though supported, they are aware, by some legal authority, they beg leave to assure your Majesty is erroneous.

A paper containing the grounds on which your Majesty's servants venture to pronounce so confident an opinion on this subject will be laid before your Majesty with the least possible delay.

Upon the question of the sufficiency of the evidence, your servants represented themselves to be satisfied that the statements of the witnesses, if not rebutted nor discredited, would amount to decisive proof of criminality ; but they cannot have made sufficiently clear the grounds of their apprehensions as to the nature and effect of this evidence.

The coincidences to which your Majesty refers, and which they had not overlooked, afford a strong argument in support of the truth of this body of testimony. But amongst the witnesses there are some whose past situation would naturally expose them to suspicion ; there may be others whose characters might be discredited ; there may be others again, against whom corruption might be alleged, and the allegation supported by testimony of which it might be difficult to detect the falsehood ; and all would be more or less exposed to the danger of being confounded by cross-examination.

The experience of judicial proceedings, both as to their result and their impression upon the public mind, affords abundant proof of the degree in which any case may be affected by circumstances of this nature, and the risk must unquestionably be aggravated where so great a proportion of the witnesses are foreigners and in a low station of life.

Your Majesty's servants are most unwilling to touch again upon the delicate point of recrimination further than may be necessary to convey to your Majesty a distinct impression of their opinions on that subject.

Your servants do not think it necessary to enter into any minute examination as to what may be the particular stages of this proceeding in which the introduction of recriminatory evidence might be resisted, or in which it might be impossible to exclude it; but your servants continue to have a strong persuasion, that in some stage or other of a hostile proceeding for divorce such evidence must find admission. Even if there should be stages of the proceeding in which the admission of evidence of this nature might be justifiably and successfully resisted, the statement and description of it could not be effectually prevented, and the very search for it, in the spirit in which that search would be made, must be attended with mischiefs and disquietudes to which it is not necessary to do more than to allude.

Your Majesty's servants deeply regret that your Majesty should have been led to believe that, whatever the forms of the House of Lords may permit, a committee of that House would sit with closed doors upon a proceeding of a judicial and criminal character.

The publication of the evidence in print might indeed, during the course of the proceeding, be restrained by order of the House, as far as that order could be made effectual; but every principle which would entitle the Princess to the right of defending her conduct would entitle her to the right of making her defence publicly, according the practice of the laws and constitution of this country.

Your Majesty's servants cannot satisfy themselves, that the limitation of the charge against the Princess to the period which has elapsed since she quitted England in 1814, could also limit her defence within that period.

The purpose for which any party against whom divorce by Act of Parliament is sought is entitled to introduce recrimination, or allegation of neglect or ill-usage, is to invalidate the claim of the other party to this special relief, or to palliate her own misconduct. Such recriminations and allegations, if brought



forward in this case, may obviously extend to circumstances antecedent to 1814.

Your Majesty's servants acknowledge with every feeling of respect, gratitude, and attachment, your Majesty's invariable readiness to incur personal inconvenience in the discharge of that which you consider as a public duty ; but consistently with the view which they have taken in their former minute, of what is likely to be most conducive to your Majesty's dignity and comfort, as well as to the interests of your people, they cannot advise your Majesty to originate a proceeding by which all these objects would, in their opinion, be put to hazard.

Your Majesty's servants trust to your Majesty's indulgence, not to impute to them an unreasonable prejudice in favour of their own suggestions, if they presume to offer a few remarks in explanation and defence of the measure which they had proposed to institute instead of a Bill of Divorce.

By this qualified measure, they never could presume to undertake entirely to secure your Majesty against all inconveniences. In truth, so far as relates to the possible return of the Princess to this country, security could not be obtained by divorce itself, unless that measure were accompanied by the enactment of banishment, under the sanction of severe penalties.

They have reasonable grounds, however, for believing that a qualified measure might not meet with resistance from the advisers of the Princess, and even from the Princess herself. They entertain this belief, not only from the obvious circumstance that the Princess is dependent for her provision, during your Majesty's life, upon your Majesty and Parliament, but in consequence of the proposition which was made by Mr. Brougham in the course of last summer ; a proposition which went beyond that now submitted to your Majesty, and to which Mr. Brougham declared his readiness to advise the Princess to consent.

If the proposition submitted by your servants does not go quite as far as that suggested by Mr. Brougham, it is not from any disinclination on their part to adopt and act upon Mr. Brougham's proposition to its full extent. But that could only be done, either by consent, or by the introduction in the first instance of a measure strictly penal. A measure strictly penal could not be

carried through Parliament without the production of evidence at the risk of consequences which your Majesty's servants deprecate, but which they forbear again to particularize. '

To obtain the same object by consent would in their opinion be highly desirable, and might, they think, be attempted with a prospect of success.

Between the probabilities of success to a measure strictly penal, and to one of a milder character, there is this essential difference; that every man who feels, as your Majesty's servants sincerely feel, a dread of the mischiefs to be produced by the disclosures which must inevitably arise out of a hostile discussion, would hail with satisfaction an expedient which, while it might equally secure your Majesty's dignity and comfort, would spare to Parliament and to the nation the pain of such disclosures.

Your servants have little doubt, but that many of the most respectable members of both Houses of Parliament would be induced to agree to a milder measure, for the express purpose of escaping these disclosures; but would resist the stronger measure, even though they might think it just, if founded upon sufficient evidence, from the single apprehension that if that measure were persisted in, and opposed, it must and ought to bring the evidence (with all that it must provoke) into public view.

With reference to the probability of the Princess's acquiescence in the measure which your servants had proposed, your Majesty puts the question, why it should be expected that the Princess would not resist when she "has more cause to complain, and is to be condemned unheard."

Your Majesty's servants cannot participate in the opinion that she would "have more cause to complain" of such a proceeding than if she were exposed by the introduction of a bill of divorce to complete destruction of character, and to the scanty provision with which the passing of such a bill might leave her.

By acquiescing in the qualified measure, the Princess would without risk secure a certain and liberal income, and her situation upon the Continent would not be materially varied from what it is at present.

Nothing could be further from their intention, nor as they humbly conceive from the true effect of their proposition, than that the

Princess should be "condemned unheard." The annexation of the condition of her continued residence abroad to the grant of a liberal provision is not in their judgment a condemnation.

If she should be persuaded to view it in that light, she would be under no obligation to allow herself to be "condemned unheard."

It would be open to her, as has been already stated, to "force enquiry." And they particularly beg your Majesty to revert to that passage in their former minute, in which they anticipated the possibility of the Princess being unhappily advised to come to such a decision, and admitted that it would alter the state of the case, and would place your Majesty in the situation of being at liberty to pursue with advantage such measures as might then in those new circumstances appear most advisable.

To sum up as shortly as possible the opinions which they have humbly submitted to your Majesty, they beg leave to observe that :

First, If your Majesty and the Princess were in the situation of private individuals, it may be assumed as certain that a divorce could not possibly be obtained.

Secondly, A bill of divorce could therefore in this case be proposed only on the paramount consideration of a *great public interest*.

Thirdly, But, in the judgment of your Majesty's servants, the proposition of a bill of divorce would under all the circumstances produce public evils and inconveniences far overbalancing any public advantage which could be expected to be derived from that measure.

Whatever other measure, therefore, they might feel themselves justified in proposing, the originating a bill of divorce is that which they cannot recommend.

Your Majesty's servants have felt it their duty, after renewed and most diligent deliberation, to re-state this their unanimous opinion with the utmost plainness and precision ; an opinion not now conceived nor declared to your Majesty for the first time, but in substance distinctly stated to your Majesty in their minute of the 17th of June, 1819.

But they implore your Majesty to allow them to conclude what they have addressed to your Majesty on this occasion, with an expression of the pain which they feel in not being able to

adopt your Majesty's views, especially on a subject in which your Majesty's personal feelings are so deeply concerned.

If the most affectionate attachment ; if the most lively sense of the delicacy and difficulty of your Majesty's embarrassing situation ; if a grateful recollection of all your Majesty's kindness to themselves collectively, as well as individually, and of all that your Majesty's administration of the Government has already contributed to the glory of the country, could overrule in the minds of your Majesty's servants the sense of their duty to your Majesty, or could justify them in their own consciences for tendering to your Majesty any other than a sincere and honest opinion, undoubtedly they would not have pressed upon your Majesty an opinion which it is matter of regret to them, rather than of surprise, to find still so repugnant to your Majesty's inclinations.

For a moment the ministers had reason to hope that their firmness was rewarded with success, when they received the following reply from their royal master :

*The King on the Minute of Cabinet.*

Carlton House, February 17th, 1820.

The King, in order to avoid all future misconception, desires to express in writing what he now considers to be the effect of the two minutes of Cabinet, dated the 10th and 14th of February.

The King understands that it is the intention of his confidential servants to propose to Parliament a bill for settling a provision on the Princess of Wales for the term of her life, and during her residence abroad, dependent however on the King's pleasure, for the purpose of enabling the King to secure, by condition with the Princess, such concessions on her part as appear to the King to be indispensable to the dignity of the Crown and his own personal honour and comfort.

The King also understands, that when it becomes necessary for the King's confidential servants to open their views on this subject to Parliament, they will declare that they have received the King's commands to adopt this mitigated measure only for the purpose of avoiding disclosure and discussion of a most painful nature, to which resort will never be had, unless



unavoidably wrung from the King by the Princess refusing to accede to this measure, and thereby driving matters to extremity ; in which case the King's confidential servants will be bound to support to the utmost every measure which will be required for the due maintenance of the dignity of the Crown, the interests of the public, and the personal honour and feeling of the King.

The King further understands that it is the intention of his confidential servants to assert and justify the omission of the Princess's name from the Liturgy.

This course of conduct on the part of the King's confidential servants, if he rightly understands it (and if he is under misapprehension, he wishes it to be explained), will be satisfactory to the King, who is ready for the sake of public decorum and the public interest to make (thus far) this great and painful sacrifice of his personal feelings.

GEORGE R.

*Minute of Cabinet.*

February 18th, 1820.

Your Majesty's confidential servants have received with the liveliest gratitude your Majesty's gracious communication of yesterday.

They beg to be permitted to offer to your Majesty their humble acknowledgments for the noble and generous sacrifice which your Majesty has made of your personal feelings (upon a subject on which those feelings must naturally be so much alive) to their dutiful representations, and to your own just sense of the public interest.

In obedience to your Majesty's commands, your Majesty's servants presume to make a single observation on the only point in your Majesty's communication which appears to require explanation.

Your Majesty's servants are clearly of opinion that the renewal and continuance, whether during her own natural life, or during the joint lives of your Majesty and the Princess, of the annuity of 35,000*l.* to her Royal Highness, being the amount of that which expired with the Act of 1814, should be granted to her only *during her residence abroad*, and that your Majesty should be enabled to make up the annuity to an amount not exceeding in the whole 50,000*l.*, the difference between the



35,000*l.* and the 50,000*l.* to be granted or withholden at your Majesty's pleasure, or upon such other conditions as your Majesty may think fit to impose.

Your Majesty's servants have only further to express to your Majesty their deep sense of your Majesty's goodness to them, and of the disinterested magnanimity with which your Majesty has acted on this painful and trying occasion.

Writing to his brother on the 13th, Lord Castlereagh had said that "he considered the Government as virtually dissolved, and that the existing ministers were only holding their situations till their successors should be appointed." But it does not seem that the hint at a possible change of his advisers was ever seriously attempted to be carried out by the King. Indeed, there was no one to whom he could possibly apply with the least chance of success. And, under this conviction, we see from the last of the letters quoted above that he professed himself satisfied with the arrangement which Lord Liverpool and his colleagues recommended, coupled with the understanding that, if the Queen should refuse the terms to be offered to her, and, as it was known that she had proposed to do in the winter, should return to England, they would then consider themselves justified in endeavouring to procure him more effectual relief.

But even before the last minute was drawn up, the case was almost hopeless. The omission of her Majesty's name from the Liturgy it was easy to represent as a most marked slight, a positive denial of her rank and position, which could not be glossed over. It was a formal assertion on the part of those who governed the nation that she did not deserve its prayers, and as such it was looked upon by her as an insult to which it was not possible to submit. She at once wrote to Lord Liverpool :

Rome, the 16th of March, 1820.

The Queen of this Relams wishes to be informed through the medium of Lord Liverpool, First Minister to the King of this

Relams, for which reason or motife the Queen name has been left out of the general Prayer-books in England, and especially to prevent all her subjects to pay her such respect which is due to the Queen. It is equally a great omittance towards the King that his consort Queen should be obliged to soummit to such great neglect, or rather araisin from a perfect ignorance of the Archbishops of the real existence of the Queen Caroline of England.

The Queen is also very anxious that Lord Liverpool should communicate this letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Lord Liverpool will be not able to believe, I am sure of it, how much the Queen was surprised of this first act of cruel Tyranne towards her, as she had been informed through the newspapers of the 22d of February, that in the cours of the Debbet in the House of Common on that evening, Lord Castlereagh, one of the best friends of Lord Liverpool, assured the Attorney-General to the Queen Caroline, Mr. Brougham, that the King's Servants would not omitte any attentions or use any harrsness towards the Queen, and after that speech of Lord Castlereagh to find her name left out of the Common Prayer-book, as if she was no longer for this world.

The Queen trusts that before she arrives in London to receive satisfactory answer from Lord Liverpool.

CAROLINE QUEEN.

In spite of the peculiar phraseology of this letter it was easy to discern its meaning. She was resolved to repair to England; and her resolution caused as much alarm and vexation to her friends as to those whom she regarded as her enemies. For they did not take her view, that the omission of her name from the Liturgy was an insult. In their eyes it was a silence which, as long as no other Prince or Princess was prayed for by name, did not of necessity imply anything.<sup>1</sup> But they saw great difficulty in persuading her to adopt their view,

<sup>1</sup> The prayer mentioned no one by name, but only besought the Divine blessing for "all the Royal Family," in which her Majesty was evidently included.



because they were aware that intelligence of the refusal of the ministers to enable the King to procure a divorce had reached her; and that she looked on that resolution of theirs as giving her a triumph over the King which it would be easy to make more decisive and conspicuous. They believed her to be further encouraged by the result of the new elections, which were generally reckoned to have been unfavorable to the ministers; a result which, indeed, was the almost unavoidable result of the notoriety of the King's displeasure with them, and of the precarious tenure on which they therefore held their offices. And, though the public did not know it, the probability of their dismissal was increased before the meeting of Parliament by the arrangement which they proposed for the Civil List; which, though framed in strict accordance with former precedents, the King considered inadequate. He urged a very considerable augmentation of the amount to be placed at his personal disposal; which they felt compelled to refuse. In a Cabinet minute they "begged permission most humbly to state that they could not honestly and conscientiously advise alterations of the nature of those which his Majesty had been pleased to propose." They pointed out that the paragraph in the Royal speech to be addressed to the two Houses which alluded to the subject, did not absolutely preclude his Majesty, under *new* or very *special* circumstances from applying to Parliament for any *new* or *special* assistance. But "they would be acting unfairly by him if they did not distinctly avow that, subject to this qualification, they considered the settlement as a settlement for the reign.

"If they were not convinced that the provision was sufficient, they would think it a fairer and more manly course to bring the whole subject now (at whatever disadvantage) under the investigation of Parliament, rather than, in proposing a settlement, to make a reservation which would at once destroy all the grace of the proposal, and keep constantly alive and in agitation a subject

which it was of the utmost importance to the Crown and the country to set at rest."

The King, though displeased, acquiesced in this disappointment also with an apparently good grace. At the moment everything appeared, in his eyes, of secondary importance when compared with the grand object of releasing himself from his marriage; and the hopes which they had given him that, if the Queen should refuse all the conditions which were to be offered to her, and should insist on coming to England, they might then think it their duty to aid him in obtaining such a release, appeared to him to offer him a fairer prospect of freedom than he could anticipate with any other Administration.

For by the middle of April it became certain that the Queen had either begun or was making arrangements for her journey. And Mr. Brougham again prepared to exert all his influence with her to change her determination. He proposed to obtain an interview with her on her way, at Aix la Chapelle, or Lisle, or any other town not much frequented by English visitors; and, at the King's personal request, Lord Hutchinson was appointed to accompany him as a sort of unofficial agent of the Government. As has been already mentioned, Mr. Brougham's opinion of her past conduct was at this time extremely unfavorable; and, if Lord Hutchinson interpreted his intentions to Lord Liverpool correctly, he meant "to point out to her in the plainest manner, that very formidable evidence existed against her, which it would be by no means for her interest should appear before the public: and that, if she should act in such a manner as to render it imperative to bring the whole of the case before the Parliament, he would not only not answer for the consequences, but he anticipated results which must be highly injurious, nay, perhaps ruinous to her interests." His influence over her, however, was not such as he had flattered himself that he should find it; or rather, it may be said, there were additional matters of irritation pressing on her mind, of which, as yet, he knew nothing,

arising from the treatment which she was receiving from foreign authorities. Since no contrary order had been issued, the notification of the accession of the new King which had been made to the different Courts had spoken of her also as Queen ; but nevertheless the foreign ministers, believing that steps would be taken to deprive her of that dignity, had refused to acknowledge it. When she applied to the Papal authorities for a passport to enable her to quit Rome, Cardinal Consalvi described her in it as Caroline, Princess of England, a description which was a folly as well as an impertinence, since, if she had any place in England at all, she had certainly ceased to be a Princess in what was now her husband's kingdom ; while the French minister, the Count de Blacas, who called her Caroline of Brunswick, refused her any passport at all. If every one's judgment had not been in some degree warped by the perplexities and annoyances of the whole affair, our Government ought to have resented the conduct of foreign officials, who thus took upon themselves to disregard their notification that she was Queen,<sup>1</sup> and to constitute themselves judges of a case which the ministers were anxious to keep from any formal investigation, and, as far as might be, to bury in silence. But it seemed to occur to no one that this conduct on the part of foreigners was an insult to the English Court and Government, which it undoubtedly was.

There is no question, however, but that (perhaps because it was more unexpected) the Queen felt it at least as deeply as the attitude which her husband assumed towards her by directing the omission of her name from the Liturgy ; and unluckily Mr. Brougham was not her only adviser.

<sup>1</sup> It is remarkable that Mr. Brougham, in a letter to Lord Hutchinson, of which a copy is among the Liverpool Papers, considers it a great blunder of the English ministers that they had "had her proclaimed in all the Courts," and one which was calculated greatly to diminish her inclination to listen to such advice as he might desire to give her on the subject of allowing her title as Queen to lie as it were in abeyance.



There was a London alderman of the name of Wood, who was smitten with an insatiable craving for notoriety, which he thought might be attained in no other way so easily as by inducing the Queen to come to England; in which event he hoped also that he might turn her visit to account in another way, by persuading her to become his tenant, as he had a house to let. He was not unknown to the Queen, who had occasionally dealt with him as a linendraper; and he placed even greater trust on his having been Lord Mayor, an office which foreigners judge of by its former importance, without any suspicion of its present insignificance.<sup>1</sup> He was also in Parliament as one of the members for the City. The Queen had of late years been so generally deserted by those on whom she had relied, that she was in a mood to be flattered by the adherence of any partisan, however contemptible. And accordingly, as soon as she turned her steps northward from Rome, by the same post by which she informed her Attorney-General of her movements, she also wrote to the Alderman a letter, oddly made up of congratulations to himself; of a detail of her own feelings and grievances, which she enumerated to him as her champion; and of an explanation of her want of some new clothes, which she ordered of him as her draper.

Pesaro, April 15th, 1820.

I am in great heaste living this place in a hour's time; Comte Byland arrived yesterday evening, which has been a great

<sup>1</sup> This view of the Alderman's motives is derived from one of Mr. Brougham's letters to Lord Hutchinson: "Wood, the ass and alderman whom they call *Thistle-wood*, talks of going to see his son at Paris. But I suspect he means to see the Queen also, for he tried to get my approbation, which I withheld. He has his job to do in making her take Castlehill; and I am clear that Carlton House ought in Monday's newspapers to put in all manner of hints and squibs against him on the score of his having his own job to do. This may keep her from listening to so great a blockhead if well done and quickly." The hint as to the way in which the jobber should be dealt with is amusing, and certainly proves the sincerity of the writer's desire to prevent her Majesty's arrival.

comfort to me. I wish you joy for your election: I never could doubted knowing how popular you are, and with great rights!

The 30th of April I shall be at Calais for certain; my health is good and my spirit is perfect. I have seen no *personne's* of any kind who could give me any advice different to my feelings and my sentiments of duty *relatif* of my present situation and rank of life: I send you the order which Cardinal Consalvi give it when I left Roma the last time and by what name he did me the honour to call me.<sup>1</sup> The French Ambassadeur would not signed my Pas-port, Blacas, and the English Consul Mr. Park with trembling hand much afraid of losing his place at last was obliged to give me a Pas-port for London.

Mr. Craven my former Chamberlan who I have at Roma will meet me at Calais!! I shall now talk to you about the silks. I send you the Patterns: them which are in gold should be made in all sort of collers. Mrs. Webbe who was formerly my mantue maker lived *oposit* Pall-Mall could send my a with [white?] silk gown and a hat of the same kind made exactly of the English fashion, as I most confesse the present *franche mode* do not please me much.

I shall writ once more from Milan, as I most remain two days on account of my Phycian to consult him, Proffessor Rosoni.

Any letter directed to Genéves will meet me. I shall be particularly happy to meet your son there.

Believe me for ever your most gratefull friend,

C. R.

To MATTHEW WOOD, ESQ. M.P.

It was plain that she was resolved at least to approach England, though the ministers did not yet believe that her departure from Italy was more than a threat, by which she hoped to extort from them and the King's fears such a

<sup>1</sup> In her letter to Mr. Brougham she says: "I send you a exact copié of a order written from the Cardinal Consalvi for my horses when I left Rome, to proof to you how far is violence and impertinence is ridiculus:"

"Il maestre della poste Pontificie sara somministrare gli occorrenti cavalli alla Principessa Carolina d'Inghelterra che se porta a Pesaro.

"C. CARD. CONSALVI."

recognition of her position and rights as would ensure her respectful treatment abroad. They were so thoroughly convinced of her guilt that they could not conceive it possible that she would really force them to sanction a public investigation of her conduct, which even her own advisers admitted would become inevitable if she returned to this kingdom. And with this belief in the middle of April they drew up a memorandum of the arrangements to which alone the King would consent, and placed it in the hands of Mr. Brougham that he might communicate it to her. It pointed out that, as the provision which had been made for the Queen, as Princess of Wales, in 1814 had ceased through the death of the late King, it had become necessary to make a fresh arrangement; and that his Majesty was now willing to recommend to Parliament to settle an annuity of 50,000*l.* on "the Queen" (this title being expressly given to her in the memorandum), on condition of her never coming into any part of the British dominions; of her taking some other name or title than that of Queen of England wherever she might reside, and of abstaining from the exercise of any of the rights or privileges of Queen, except such as related to the appointment of law officers.

By some singular mismanagement this paper was not delivered to the Queen till after her arrival in England. Mr. Brougham, when he received it, intended to deliver it in person; but, when he subsequently crossed over to France in company with Lord Hutchinson to confer with her on the subject, he judged from the temper in which he found her that there were conditions in it which would tend only to produce additional irritation in her mind, and under this impression he took on himself the responsibility of entirely withholding it; but its delivery or non-delivery would, in all likelihood, not have made any difference in her decision. It might have fairly been urged to her in support of the arrangement thus offered, that the admission of her right as Queen to appoint an attorney and solicitor-general

was a sufficient acknowledgment of her rank, which could not be effaced or neutralized by her adopting, while in a foreign country, that recognised incognito which crowned heads at that time so frequently assumed. The views which both the Government and Mr. Brougham as the Queen's chief adviser took of the whole matter at this time, with the resolution which they were both desirous to induce her to adopt, and the course which they themselves pursued, will be best explained by the following papers, the first of which is a minute drawn up by Lord Liverpool himself, and submitted by him to Lord Hutchinson and Mr. Brougham, as "a narrative of all that had occurred between Lord Hutchinson, Mr. Brougham, and himself, from the month of February to the time when they left London for St. Omer;" and the second contains a series of questions addressed to Lord Liverpool by Mr. Brougham for his own justification, with the answers to each.

*Lord Liverpool's Memorandum.*

The first interview Lord Liverpool ever had with Mr. Brougham respecting the affairs of the Queen was in the month of February last.

Lord Liverpool desired to see Mr. Brougham for the purpose of acquainting him that, though the Queen's annuity had expired by the demise of the late King, the Government would recommend to his present Majesty to continue the allowance as settled in 1814 till after the new Parliament was assembled, and the subject could be submitted for its consideration.

Lord Liverpool then referred to the communication made by Mr. Brougham through Lord Hutchinson in the month of June, 1819, and he asked him whether any arrangement could now be made on the principles then stated, with a view of preventing the painful and unpleasant consequences which must arise from a public investigation of the Queen's conduct.

Mr. Brougham admitted the importance both on public and private grounds of averting such an investigation. He expressed his anxiety to do everything which could fairly be expected from him in his situation for this purpose; but at the same time said that the difficulties would be much greater now



than they were last year, as the Queen might be said now to be in *possession*, and that there was a difference between proposing to her to give up advantages which she now enjoyed, but which did not belong to her when the former proposition was made.

Lord Liverpool observed that this argument might be said to tell both ways ; for that the Queen, though not Queen at that time, was then in the possession of an income of 35,000*l.* a year ; that this income was limited to the late King's life ; that it had now lapsed ; and that she was wholly destitute of any sort of provision ; that she was entirely dependent therefore on the King and Parliament, and that Parliament could not move in the business without the authority or recommendation of the King.

Mr. Brougham admitted the force of these observations.

Lord Liverpool then said that the main point was to prevent the Queen from returning to this country before an explanation could be opened with her.

Mr. Brougham informed Lord Liverpool that he had already written to her Majesty to prevent such a step ; that he should write again to her for the same purpose ; and that he should inform her that if she would come to some convenient place not far distant from England (such as Brussels or Lisle), Mr. Brougham would go over to meet her as soon as his election had terminated, and would do all in his power to settle matters in such a manner as to prevent any public explosion.

The conversation then turned upon the Queen's name being omitted in the Liturgy, and upon the right to appoint the Attorney and Solicitor-General.

Upon the first point Mr. Brougham gave his opinion that, if the Duke of York, or any other of the royal family had been named, it would have been an act offensive to the Queen, but the measure adopted he regarded as of a neutral character.

Upon the latter point he expressed his wish to obviate the difficulty, though he was in possession of the appointment, if the rank could be given to him and Mr. Denman,<sup>1</sup> which would supersede the necessity of using it.

Several notes afterwards passed between Lord Liverpool and Mr. Brougham on collateral points. They do not appear to

<sup>1</sup> He meant the rank of K.C., "a silk gown."



Lord Liverpool to be of any importance, but they may be referred to if necessary.

Nothing indeed of importance, in Lord Liverpool's opinion, further occurred till after Mr. Brougham's return from Westmoreland.

Early in the month of April the Vice-Chancellor and Sir Benjamin Bloomfield came down to Lord Liverpool at Coombe Wood, and acquainted him that they had seen Lord Hutchinson, who had seen Mr. Brougham; that the King had expressed a desire that Lord Hutchinson should accompany Mr. Brougham when he should go to meet the Queen, if Lord Liverpool saw no objection to it; that Mr. Brougham had assured Lord Hutchinson of the satisfaction which he should receive from Lord Hutchinson's complying with his Majesty's wishes, and that the King desired that Lord Liverpool would see Lord Hutchinson and Mr. Brougham together.

Lord Liverpool fixed a time for seeing them. He said that he felt no personal objection to Lord Hutchinson accompanying Mr. Brougham, but that he could not give a decided opinion upon it without consulting his colleagues, many of whom at that time had not returned to the neighbourhood of London.

Lord Liverpool saw Lord Hutchinson and Mr. Brougham at Fife House two or three days after making this appointment.

Lord Liverpool stated to them the general nature of the proposition which would be to be made, but he said he was aware of the delicate situation of Mr. Brougham as the Queen's legal adviser, and that, in order to obviate all possible misconception, the propositions should be reduced to writing, that they should be as clear and distinct as possible, and that they should be given to Mr. Brougham as the authority on which he was to act.

Lord Liverpool then added that the paramount object would be to prevent the Queen's arrival in this country: that as long as she was anywhere abroad the discussions might continue without much inconvenience, but that her landing in England would force the Government to a decision, and that a proceeding in Parliament would then be unavoidable.

Mr. Brougham admitted the inconvenience of the Queen's coming to this country, but put the case of her coming merely for a short time, and for her private affairs.

The conversation ended with Mr. Brougham desiring to have the memorandum as soon as possible. Lord Liverpool said that he could not conveniently summon his colleagues for two or three days, but in a week or ten days he would see Lord Hutchinson and Mr. Brougham again.

About the 15th of April Lord Liverpool saw Lord Hutchinson and Mr. Brougham together a second time. He read the memorandum of propositions to be made to the Queen, and made such observations as appeared to him necessary upon them, and more particularly respecting that part which related to the title of Queen, which he explained to be no renunciation of her title and rights, but an engagement to take, whilst on the Continent, some other title; to which he thought she might be the more easily reconciled, as it was the almost invariable practice of sovereigns, and indeed of other princes, when they travelled out of their own dominions, to travel under assumed titles.

Lord Liverpool certainly considered Mr. Brougham as the bearer of the propositions, not as a negotiator on the part of the King (for Lord Liverpool himself was in that character), but as the Attorney-General of the Queen.

Lord Hutchinson was to accompany Mr. Brougham, according to the King's wishes, Mr. Brougham being desirous of having some person with him who possessed his Majesty's personal good opinion as well as that of the Government.

At this interview some conversation took place respecting the alleged forgery of the Duke of Brunswick's name to a bill which had been made the subject of a suit in the Court of Chancery.

Lord Liverpool stated his reasons for being convinced that this was a forgery, and that if hostile discussions took place, it would prejudice the Queen in the public mind as much as any other parts of her conduct.

Lord Liverpool produced the copy of the bill in Chancery, and both Lord Hutchinson and Mr. Brougham desired to have copies of it. This was never considered as the main accusation against the Queen, but as a collateral circumstance of great importance, and that it was but fair that she should be aware of this imputation as well as others, before she took the desperate step of coming to this country.

Lord Liverpool then again adverted to the extreme importance of preventing this step, and of her knowing, if necessary (but in the least menacing manner), that her landing in this country would immediately lead to a message to Parliament respecting her conduct.

Mr. Brougham acknowledged that he was aware of this determination, but said it was a matter which, in his situation, it would be difficult for him to make use of, and he wished Lord Liverpool, therefore, to write to Lord Hutchinson upon it.

Lord Liverpool agreed to do this, and wrote, in consequence, the letter of the 20th April, which was the only written communication ever given to Lord Hutchinson by Lord Liverpool.

This second interview was the last that took place between Lord Liverpool and Lord Hutchinson and Mr. Brougham together.

Lord Liverpool saw Mr. Brougham several times after this meeting, and received from time to time notes from him.

The conversation and the notes turned principally upon the probable movements of the Queen, and when it would be necessary for Mr. Brougham and Lord Hutchinson to set out. Nothing of importance that was new or material occurred on these occasions, except that after the arrival of Vassali with letters from the Queen, Mr. Brougham wrote to Lord Liverpool a note, in which he informed him that Vassali had told Mr. Brougham, with reference to the alleged forgery, that the person was living who had given the money into the Duke of Brunswick's hands.

On the day before Mr. Brougham's departure, Lord Liverpool saw him in one of the private rooms in the House of Lords, and Mr. Brougham expressed a wish that Lord Liverpool should see Lord Hutchinson, and apprise him of the sentiments of Government, as to what would be done if the Queen actually landed in England, and likewise what answer was to be returned, if the Queen were to put any question as to the difficulty of carrying the arrangement proposed by Government in Parliament.

Lord Liverpool did see Lord Hutchinson twice in the course of that day, and as far as he recollects these are the only interviews he had with Lord Hutchinson subsequent to the meeting of Mr. Brougham and Lord Hutchinson together, when Lord

Liverpool delivered to the former the memorandum on the 15th of April.

In this conversation with Lord Hutchinson nothing material occurred. Lord Liverpool had, in his letter of the 20th of April to Lord Hutchinson, communicated to his Lordship the intentions of Government in the event of the Queen landing; and upon the other point he could only say, that he had every reason to hope that Parliament would adopt the proposition of Government, in order to avert the unpleasant consequences of an explosion on such a matter; but if they should reject the proposal the Queen would be bound to nothing.

In the course of the evening of this day, Lord Liverpool and Lord Melville received letters from the Queen and Lady Anne Hamilton, applying for a residence in or near London, and the Royal yacht to convey her.

Upon this Lord Liverpool wrote to Mr. Brougham to inform him of these applications, and to urge his departure, stating that if the Queen landed, a message would be sent down immediately to Parliament respecting her conduct.

Mr. Brougham replied to Lord Liverpool, that he did not consider the application for the yacht as a decisive proof of the Queen's intending to come, but he guards himself against having held out any expectations that might not be realized, and reserves to himself the right of giving to the Queen any advice which may be most conducive to her interests after he shall have heard her, declaring at the same time, that all his views and feelings are still the same as they have always been upon the whole case.

*Questions by Mr. Brougham.*

*Answers by Lord Liverpool.*

June 10th, 1820.

1. Did Mr. Brougham ever say to Lord Liverpool, or give him to understand, that he would advise the Queen to accept the terms of which Lord Liverpool gave him a memorandum?

1. Lord Liverpool did understand Mr. Brougham substantially to approve of the terms contained in the memorandum, but not thereby to be precluded from proposing modifications of them, if upon conversation with the Queen, he should deem such modification reasonable.

2. Did not Mr. Brougham on the contrary suggest many difficulties and objections that were sure to be made ; for example, her being now Queen, her having no security that the Parliament would agree, her appearing to give up her defence ? And did not Mr. Brougham go at large into the very great difference between this arrangement and that of 1814, when Lord Liverpool was comparing them ?

3. Did not Mr. Brougham say to Lord Liverpool at the House of Lords the last time he saw his lordship, that there were some things on which he (Lord Liverpool) must instruct Lord Hutchinson, and on which he (Mr. Brougham) desired not to hear Lord Liverpool's answer, and did he not specify in particular these two ; that Lord Hutchinson must be informed by Lord Liverpool how he was to meet the objection as to Parliament not agreeing ; and that he must also be told how to answer the remark that though the Queen did come over, she

2. Mr. Brougham did state the difficulties and objections mentioned in the second question, but Lord Liverpool understood him to state them as difficulties and objections likely to be made and urged by the Queen, rather than difficulties and objections strongly felt by Mr. Brougham himself.

Lord Liverpool recollects a comparison between Mr. Brougham's proposals of June 1819 and those contained in the memorandum delivered to Mr. Brougham. He has no recollection of any discussion relative to the arrangement of 1814, but he will not take upon himself to say that it may not have been incidentally alluded to.

3. Mr. Brougham, in his last interview with Lord Liverpool in the House of Lords, did express a desire that Lord Liverpool should see Lord Hutchinson and communicate with him on the two points stated in the third question, and Lord Liverpool did in consequence see Lord Hutchinson ; but Lord Liverpool never considered Lord Hutchinson as the bearer of any proposition to the Queen, and any conversation therefore which passed between Lord Liverpool and Lord Hutchinson, was only for the purpose of apprising the latter of the



might still agree to go away again, and that her mere coming was no attack on the King?

sentiments of Government, in the event of Lord Hutchinson being called in by Mr. Brougham to facilitate the arrangement.

4. Did not Mr. Brougham merely receive the memorandum as the Queen's counsel, and uniformly act as if he considered Lord Hutchinson the person who was to make the proposition, else why was he to go at all?

4. The memorandum of the 15th April was delivered to Mr. Brougham only. The King, the Government, and Lord Liverpool always considered Mr. Brougham as the bearer of those propositions to the Queen. Lord Hutchinson had never any copy of this memorandum, nor any written instruction whatever from Lord Liverpool (or from any other quarter) except upon the single point of the consequences of the Queen landing in this country, which gave occasion to Lord Liverpool's letter to Lord Hutchinson of the 20th of April, written to Lord Hutchinson at Mr. Brougham's express desire.

5. Did not Mr. Brougham write to Lord Liverpool before going, and after receiving the letter announcing Lord Liverpool's intention to send a message if the Queen came; and did not Mr. Brougham in that letter fairly tell Lord Liverpool that he (Mr. Brougham) might very possibly feel it his duty to advise the Queen to return to England, after he should have heard her case from herself? And could Lord Liverpool have

5. Mr. Brougham did write a letter to Lord Hutchinson on the very day on which he left London; in which, after stating that he did not consider the application for the yacht as a decisive proof of the Queen's intending to land in this country, he guards himself against having held out any expectations that might not be realized, and reserves to himself the right of giving his client such advice as he may judge (after having

any doubt that such advice meant even more than advising her to reject the offer?

heard her) most conducive to her interests; but he concludes the letter with saying that all his views and feelings are still the same as they have always been on the whole case.

Lord Liverpool certainly understood Mr. Brougham's letter to mean what it expressed, and nothing more.

6. Does not Lord Liverpool see plainly that much of Mr. Brougham's doubt touching his own line of conduct rested on the particulars of the alleged forgery, which Mr. Brougham always told Lord Liverpool he knew nothing of; and did not Mr. Brougham give Lord Liverpool intimation the moment he heard these partially explained by Colonel Vassali?

6. The matter of the forgery was always stated by Lord Liverpool to be a strong collateral circumstance, and one likely to make a very unfavorable impression against the Queen in the public mind, but it never was considered as the main charge against her Majesty.

Mr. Brougham did give Lord Liverpool the earliest information of what he had heard from Count Vassali on this subject.

The Queen travelled more slowly than she had intended. The second week of May had opened before she reached Geneva: mollified probably in some degree by the attentions which, while passing through the dominions of the King of Sardinia, she had received from that monarch; but still determined to place herself within a few hours' journey of the English coast, so as to receive the proposals, which she knew awaited her, at some place where, if she should reject them, the intelligence of her refusal should not reach London in time to allow any attempt to be made to prevent her further progress. Finally, she fixed at St. Omer as the town at which she would stop, and sent a courier to desire Mr. Brougham to meet her there on Tuesday the 30th. Business detained him in London beyond the time appointed; but on the 2d of June he

set out: first reserving to himself, by a letter which he addressed to Lord Liverpool, a full right to give his client any advice which, on hearing her statements, he might judge best for her honour and interest; but expressing his reliance on Lord Liverpool's candour to do him justice, a confidence which the minister's reply frankly assured him was not misplaced.

Tuesday.

Mr. Brougham presents his compliments to Lord Liverpool, and intends to leave town this day at three, having ascertained that no time could have been saved by going earlier, as no boat can sail before to-morrow.

Mr. Brougham used Lord Liverpool's name in writing to Mr. Latham last night.

Mr. Brougham had not, before receiving Lord Liverpool's last note, heard of any application being made for the Royal yacht; but, as he stated yesterday, he knows nothing of any resolution which the Queen may have come to respecting her journey to this country, and, as far as his own opinion goes, he by no means regards the above request of the Royal yacht in the light of a decisive proof.

At the same time Mr. Brougham trusts Lord Liverpool, and such of his colleagues as he may have communicated with, will do him the justice to recollect that he has never undertaken to say the Queen would not come, and, if she should resolve upon taking this course without his advice, or even if, under all circumstances, and after hearing what she has to say, he should advise the step<sup>1</sup> (for as yet he really can hardly say that he

<sup>1</sup> This passage was afterwards expressly alluded to in the House of Commons by Mr. Brougham, in the debate of June 7th (Parliamentary Debates, 977). It is remarkable that in the same speech he had just before expressly allowed that the proposal conveyed to him by Lord Liverpool in the memorandum of April 15th "he was bound as the servant of the Queen to deliver to his mistress;" but he gave no explanation of the cause, or motive, which prevented him from delivering it; and all the explanation which he ever gave on this point was in the debate of June 22d, when he said that it had been given to him, "not for transmission," but that he might deliver it to her personally. "When he went to France he had not had an opportunity of

has formed any very clear opinion upon the matter), he thinks Lord Liverpool's candour will protect him against any charge of having held out any expectations not realized, and still more of having helped to frustrate them himself. His situation is a very delicate one in several respects, and though his private wishes must be quite clearly on one side, yet he cannot answer for his finding himself in a situation to consult them consistently with his duty to his client.

One thing he, however, can safely undertake : as far as he is concerned, or as his advice may be followed, he never upon any account will sanction any one step being taken, either in Parliament or out of doors, for the purpose of mere annoyance, and that whatever happens, as far as depends on him, no part of the Queen's proceedings ever shall be made subservient either to popular or party purposes.

Mr. Brougham relies on Lord Liverpool's well-known fairness for seeing that at present he cannot go beyond this assurance, but all his views and feelings are still the same as they have always been on the whole case.

*P.S.* Since writing this note Mr. Brougham has learnt from the courier who arrived last night to Lord Liverpool that Mr. Alderman Wood is with the Queen.

Fife House, 1st June, 1820.

Lord Liverpool presents his compliments to Mr. Brougham. He has just read his note, and has only to say in observation upon it that Mr. Brougham may rely upon Lord Liverpool doing full justice to Mr. Brougham's conduct in every part of the delicate transaction in which he has been engaged.

Lord Liverpool has never doubted it was Mr. Brougham's sincere wish to prevent the unpleasant consequences which must arise from the arrival of the Queen, and that he would be actuated by a due regard to these considerations as far as the professional relation in which he stood to the Queen would permit.

laying this memorandum before her Majesty ; but nobody, who was not actually on the spot, could form any idea of the strange and unaccountable accidents by which he was prevented from calling her Majesty's attention to this document, previously to the delivery of Lord Hutchinson's communication." (Parliamentary Debates, 1311.)

Lord Liverpool certainly regrets that Mr. Brougham's other engagements prevented from him meeting the Queen at Geneva, but he will still hope that he will arrive in time to avert the inconveniences which must result from her Majesty landing in this country.

Mr. Brougham's first interview with the Queen was thus described by him in a letter written as soon as it had terminated :

*Private.*

St. Omer, June 3d, 1820.

MY LORD,

I arrived here to-day, and having lost no time in seeing the Queen, I think it necessary to apprize your Lordship of what has passed.

I had a conversation of two hours with her Majesty, and I must say I never saw a resolution more fixed than that which she has taken to go to England without loss of time. All her Italian attendants have to-day obtained passports. They were to have set out on their way home early to-morrow morning, and I have with difficulty made them stay over to-morrow, in the hope that I may be able in the course of the day to induce the Queen at least *to delay* her journey. I afterwards presented Lord Hutchinson to her, and he entirely agrees with me in thinking the thing at present next to certain. She received him with great politeness, and I think it right to add that both the Queen's manners and the behaviour of the foreigners in her suite drew from him a very positive declaration that matters have been grossly misrepresented as far as regards external appearances. I may add my own humble opinion (which after his can avail but little) that I never saw greater propriety of behaviour in any station than that of the persons in question.

I no sooner learnt the Queen's intention of immediately proceeding to England, than I gave her my own opinion in the most explicit terms ; and I informed her that the moment she landed the Government had come to a clear and unequivocal determination of sending a message to Parliament, which must at once put an end to all negotiation. I added that she should to-morrow see this under your Lordship's hand,



But my reason for sending this letter so soon, and without waiting for the effect of the intermediate reflection, and of seeing your letter, is because I plainly discovered through the whole conversation that the principal cause of her positive determination to go to England is the treatment she has received abroad. Nine parts in ten of her complaints turn upon that. She mentions Cardinal Gonsalvi and Mr. Park, but chiefly dwells upon the conduct of Baron Ryden<sup>1</sup> and the Count de Blacas, and, as far as I can judge, with great reason. They give her the name of Caroline of Brunswick, and still more absurdly, Caroline of England, with other indignities too long to detail. It is easy to see that this has driven her home.

I ventured to assure her Majesty that these things were wholly unknown to and unauthorised by our Government, but she can see no way of avoiding such insults but going to England at once.

My earnest entreaty to her has been to wait a day or two, and not decide rashly; but she says she has long and well considered the whole matter, and I rather dread some very sudden movement. It is on this account that I now write to state my clear opinion, that the only chance of preventing her Majesty's immediate return is an assurance authoritatively conveyed to her, through either Lord Hutchinson or myself, that one part of the condition of her remaining abroad shall be the most ample instructions to our ministers abroad to treat her as Queen.

From this your Lordship will perceive that I have not ventured even to hint at the renunciation proposed by your Lordship; indeed, I never deemed that at all within the possibility of the case, and I am now certain that the bare mention of the thing would have been followed within five minutes by an order of post-horses to go to Calais. Lord Hutchinson, however, though he has been prevailed on to defer this proposition, means soon to make it.

Your Lordship may further perceive from this letter that my own opinion is now decided, both as to what can be accomplished and what I ought to advise. In the peculiarly delicate situation in which I stand, I must be as explicit as possible with your Lordship, and therefore, relying on your secrecy, I shall state it.

<sup>1</sup> Baron Ryden, or Riden, was the Hanoverian Minister at Rome.

If it be only her Majesty's intention to go once to England for a few weeks, I am decidedly against any such plan, because I see nothing but mischief in such a proceeding. But in order to enable me to turn her aside from it, I must add that I see most plainly the necessity of your Lordship giving either Lord Hutchinson or myself the assurance above alluded to; and, as a day's delay can only bring Lord Hutchinson's application to the same effect, I think the risk of her Majesty's setting out before the answer to it arrives may be lessened by my writing this letter.

I have the honour to be, &c.

H. BROUGHAM.

As he here explained (though Lord Liverpool seems not to have understood from his language that he had taken the bold step of altogether withholding the memorandum entrusted to him, but only that he had abstained from recommending to the Queen the "renunciation" required in it), he had not ventured to announce to her the conditions which alone the King was willing to grant. But, after a second interview with his client on the same evening, he made a formal application to Lord Hutchinson for some definite proposal on the part of the Government, and received from him a reply which explained that he had not been furnished with any specific proposition; but added a statement of the terms on which he knew, from conversations which had passed between himself and the Prime Minister on the subject, that the King would insist. They were identical in every point with those laid down in the April memorandum, with the exception that, while that paper had only stipulated that "she should engage to take some other name or title than that of Queen," this condition, as Lord Hutchinson now worded it, was so altered as to debar her from using "any title attached to the royal family of England." Lord Hutchinson likewise added that Lord Liverpool had also specially instructed him that "it was material that Her Majesty should know confidentially that, if she should be so ill-advised as to come over to

this country, there must be an end to all negotiation and compromise. The decision, he might say, was taken to proceed against her as soon as she should set foot on the British shore." Mr. Brougham afterwards spoke of the prohibition to assume any inferior title belonging to the royal family, as an insulting aggravation of the first prohibition against using the title of Queen; but it is not probable that this refinement was noticed at the moment, and his opinion of the reception which she would have given the April memorandum was justified by her conduct on receiving Lord Hutchinson's note. She at once commanded him to reply to that nobleman that "it was quite impossible for her to listen to such a proposition;" and a few minutes afterwards, acting with such precipitation that Mr. Brougham had no suspicion of her intentions till he saw her carriage drive from the door of the hotel, she quitted St. Omer for Calais. Mr. Brougham's feelings and conduct are best explained by his own account of them to Lord Liverpool.

*Most secret.*

St. Omer, June 4th, 1820.

MY LORD,

My letter of last night may have prepared your Lordship for hearing that, five minutes after the Queen had rejected Lord Hutchinson's proposition this evening at five o'clock, which she did the moment it was made, she set out for Calais, having previously prepared everything for her journey, and sent all her Italian attendants off to Italy.

I had not advised her to accept that proposal, but I strongly urged her to offer terms, viz. to stay abroad provided she were acknowledged and respected as Queen. I did this in the spirit which has always regulated my conduct in this affair, that of preventing whatever tended only to annoy and to force on discussions unnecessary in themselves, and hurtful to the country. In the same spirit I have most earnestly urged her Majesty to go (if she finally resolves to go) as secretly as possible; and I wrote to her at Calais to-night to repeat my remonstrances, and to entreat that she would at least give Lord Hutchinson time to send a courier to London for fresh

instructions. Your Lordship will see from the enclosed what view I have taken of this matter.

I sincerely regret the failure of the negotiation on every account ; but, even if the Queen had listened to me alone, and had paid far more attention to my advice than she has done, I feel that my sense of public duty could not have carried me further than I went, considering the duty which I owed to my client. To that length those two duties coincided perfectly ; and, though I cannot allow myself for a moment to suppose that the Queen runs any risk by the step she is taking, yet I am certain that she exposes herself to trouble which might have been avoided.

Your Lordship's faithful servant,

H. BROUGHAM.

*P.S.* I afterwards wrote a still stronger remonstrance to Calais, which *may* produce some effect, though I hardly dare to hope it. Mr. Alderman Wood and Lady Anne Hamilton went with the Queen, and neither of them are acquainted with any one part of her case. It seems difficult, therefore, to suppose that they should offer advice, and still more so to imagine that it can be taken.

*Enclosure.*

St. Omer, June 4th, 1820.

MADAM,

I entreat your Majesty once more to reflect calmly and impartially on the step about to be taken, and to permit me to repeat my deliberate opinion. I do not advise your Majesty to entertain the proposition that has been made ; but, if another proposition were made instead of it, I should earnestly urge your Majesty to accept it, namely, that the annuity should be granted without any renunciation of rank, or title and rights, and with a pledge on the part of the Government that your Majesty should be acknowledged and received abroad by all the diplomatic agents of the country according to your rank and station, but that your Majesty should not go to England.

The reason why I should give this advice is, that I can see no real good to your Majesty in such an expedition if your Majesty can obtain without going all that it is possible to wish. I give this advice most sincerely, convinced that it

is calculated to save your Majesty an infinite deal of pain and anxiety, and also because I am sure it is for the interest of the country. Suffer me, Madam, to add that there are some persons whose advice is of a different cast, and who will be found very feeble allies in the hour of difficulty.

I know not that I have a right to proceed further, but a strong sense of duty impels me. If your Majesty shall determine to go to England before any new offer can be made, I earnestly implore your Majesty to proceed in the most private and secret manner possible. It may be very well for a candidate at an election to be drawn into towns by the populace, and they will mean nothing but good in showing this attention to your Majesty; but a Queen of England may well dispense with such marks of popular favour; and my duty to your Majesty binds me to say very plainly that I shall consider every such exhibition as both hurtful to your Majesty's real dignity and full of danger in its probable consequences.

I know your Majesty's goodness and good sense too well not to be convinced that you will pardon me for thus once more urging what I had before in conversation stated, and I have the honour to be,

H. BROUGHAM.

The last letter, however, did not reach the Queen till she was actually on board the packet which was preparing to sail for Dover when she reached Calais. Even after so decisive a step on her part, Mr. Brougham could not yet relinquish the hope that he might be able to prevail on her to return; and he wrote one more letter to Lord Liverpool to beg for a few hours' respite before the threatened message should be sent to Parliament, in order that he might make one more attempt to avert the necessity of such a step; and perhaps he had the greater hope of succeeding because the condition which, in his letter to the Queen, he had mentioned as one which it would not be inconsistent with her self-respect to accept, a recognition of her rank and station by the diplomatic agents of the country abroad, was one to which (as was subsequently seen in the conferences between himself and Mr. Denman with the Duke



of Wellington and Lord Castlereagh), the ministers themselves were willing with certain modifications to consent.

*Private.*

St. Omer, Monday morning.

MY LORD,

The courier sent from Calais early this morning must have reached your Lordship before this can arrive, and the Queen in all probability will have reached London also.

I shall be there to-morrow evening if the wind permits, and I have only to request that the message to Parliament may not be sent until I am in my place. I trust I need hardly repeat to your Lordship my assurances how much I regret the failure of my negotiation; and I beg leave to add that I shall at all times be ready to lend my aid in case it is renewed, being deeply convinced that the best interests both of the country and the parties require an amicable arrangement on the basis of mutual sacrifices; nor does it follow that the Queen when in England will reject the advice I may then offer, as she has before her arrival.

I have the honour to be, &c.

H. BROUGHAM.

Lord Hutchinson, however, who lost no time in transmitting to Lord Liverpool a narration on his part also of the transactions at St. Omer, had no doubt that Mr. Brougham altogether overrated his influence with her Majesty. She had gradually wrought herself up to such a pitch of excitement that the more judicious advice was, the less chance it had of being listened to. It may even be that the very delicacy with which he avoided every offensive topic, and, though not forbearing to hint at "danger" to herself, yet pressed upon her as the chief consideration "the interest of the country," aided those who, however incapable, had their faculties sharpened by intense selfishness into an acuteness of low cunning, in their endeavours to persuade her that the King was only threatening what he would not have courage or power to execute, and had more to dread from her arrival than herself.

*Private and confidential.*

St. Omers, Monday, June 5th, 1820.

MY DEAR LORD,

A communication from Mr. Fonblanque, British Consul at Calais, had probably prepared your Lordship for the immediate arrival of the Queen in England. It was impossible for me to give you any previous intelligence of what were likely to be the motions of her Majesty. I had no courier at my disposition, as the King's private messenger, who went to take charge of my nephew from Paris, did not arrive at St. Omers, until an hour and a half after the Queen's departure. I had no means whatever of retarding in the slightest degree either her journey or her embarkation. Had it been in my power, through the assistance and co-operation of the French authorities, to have done so, I certainly should have thought it my duty to have prevented the Queen's arrival in England at so unexpected a moment, without giving his Majesty's Government any time, however short, for consideration or preparation. The fact is, that the commandant of this town offered her Majesty a guard of honour immediately on her arrival here, and the commandant of Calais also waited on her in full uniform. I think that the English Government have every reason to complain of the conduct of the French authorities.

I learnt, to my great surprise, from Mr. Brougham, but not until late last night, that he had made a communication to your Lordship through Mr. Fonblanque dated the 3d inst. I state this merely in order to account to your Lordship for my not having written to you by the same opportunity; but the fact is, Mr. Brougham sent off his letter without giving me the smallest information on the subject, and Mr. Fonblanque, supposing that it was a communication with which I was acquainted, thought it his duty immediately to forward it to England. The negotiation, if negotiation it can be called, commenced at a little after twelve yesterday, and ended about half-past four, as her Majesty left this before five. I enclose copies of the correspondence which took place.<sup>1</sup>

When Mr. Brougham left me yesterday morning at 11 o'clock to

<sup>1</sup> All the letters are not to be found; but of those which are still preserved, the substance is sufficiently given in other parts of this narrative: they were very brief.

go to the Queen, he did not appear to be at all aware that her Majesty meant to act in the precipitate manner she has done. His first letter (marked No. 1) therefore came upon me quite unexpectedly. I did not exactly comprehend the meaning of it. I thought his object was that I should write something that might pacify the mind of the Queen for the moment, and enable us both to gain time. Such was my view in writing the note No. 2. Immediately afterwards I received the note marked No. 3; and so impatient was the Queen to receive the second communication, that she sent to me a little after four, and I was obliged to get my answer marked No. 4, copied out fair in the handwriting of Mr. Brougham's brother. I was induced to make my last proposition by a private hint from Mr. Brougham; she did not receive it until after she had left St. Omers, but it was forwarded to her to Calais, and I understand that she received it when she was on board the packet ready to sail for England.

I am now to observe to you that in the whole of this negotiation, Mr. Brougham, as far as my judgment enables me to go, does not appear to have possessed the smallest degree of power, weight, or authority over the mind of the Queen; he exaggerated to himself, and consequently to others, the influence which I dare say he thought he possessed over her. To speak to you in confidence, I think that her violence and determination subdued him, and that he failed in making the slightest impression upon her. He may be, and I dare say has been, most sincere; but as for influence, if it did ever exist, there certainly was no appearance of it on the present occasion. I do not know who her counsellors were; I cannot attribute much to Alderman Wood, Lady Anne Hamilton, or the Italians who surround her. I believe she took counsel from her own rashness, presumption, and obstinacy alone. She appears to me to be a woman of most decided and determined character.

I made the communication No. 6 in conformity to what I thought to be the views of your Lordship and your colleagues, which were to avoid giving publicity to the unhappy transactions which have disgraced the life and stained the character of this extraordinary woman, in order to show you that I had done everything in my power to deserve the confidence which

your Lordship had been pleased to honour me with, and that I had exhausted every effort to conciliate the irritated feelings of the Queen.

I cannot at this moment enter into further details, but must defer what more I have to say till I have the honour of meeting your Lordship in London.

I have some apologies to make to your Lordship, as I find upon perusal that my communications are neither so correct nor so distinct as I could have wished them to have been ; but I was greatly hurried and agitated, particularly in writing note No. 4, as I was really apprehensive that her Majesty might have left the town before I had time to communicate to her the intentions of his Majesty and his government,

I have the honour to be, my dear Lord,

With great regard and esteem,

Your Lordship's most faithful humble servant,

HUTCHINSON.

The request to abstain from any irrevocable act till Mr. Brougham should return to the House of Commons proved needless, because, as the vessel in which she took her passage was detained for some hours in Calais harbour by foul winds, the news of her arrival at Dover, which took place on the afternoon of the 5th, could not reach London in time for a communication to be made to Parliament that day ; and on the next afternoon he was present in his place when, while the Queen was still on her road, the ministers brought down to both Houses a message from the King announcing that her arrival in England had made it necessary for him to communicate to them documents relating to her conduct since her departure from the kingdom, which he recommended to their immediate and serious attention.

Very few acts have brought such vehement attacks at the time on any Ministry, or have since had their propriety more gravely questioned even by the admirers of their general policy, than this message, which was the first step to an investigation and disclosures such as had rarely tainted the fame of a Royal House. The ministers have



been even blamed the more because of their previous resistance to such a measure, as if they had now surrendered their feelings of duty to the country to an unworthy desire to retain their offices. It is remarkable, however, that not only did they themselves think that the Queen's journey to this country in defiance of the King's wish deprived them of any alternative, but that Mr. Brougham himself was of the same opinion ; and, in the short discussion which ensued the same evening on the delivery of the message, spoke of his client's resolution to come to England as one which "had rendered any longer silence on the subject almost impossible." Nor will any one who weighs all the circumstances with candour find it difficult to discern reasons of great weight to justify the ministers in the course which they adopted, and the Queen's advocate in his expression of acquiescence.

For the question must not be looked at as if no one had been concerned in it but the King and Queen themselves. Had it been so, it might certainly be admitted that the King, as a husband, had no title to relief. But there was a third party to be considered, the nation at large ; and, as to them, the case had been changed in some of its most essential features, from the appearance which it bore in 1814, by the fact of his accession to the throne. In 1814 Queen Charlotte was still alive to preside over the court, and the Princess of Wales had no station but such as she and the Regent chose to allow her ; but now the Princess had herself become Queen, and, so long as she remained in the country unquestioned, must unavoidably be the head of all the female society of Britain. She must either hold the drawing-rooms attended by the King himself, or the court must be altogether shut up ; since the King could not hold them by himself while she was in the country, nor was it within even his prerogative to give any of his sisters such precedence over her as could enable them to assume the state which belonged to her. The Queen, if resident in the country, must preside over the court ;



and the consequence would have been that the court would have been deserted, by all at least who could shed a lustre on it by their position and character ; and in the slights thus offered to her, royalty itself would have seemed to be brought into contempt. From such a posture of affairs the ministers may be excused for desiring to save the nation, even though that preservation could not be achieved without great public scandal ; they may be justified for thinking that still greater scandal, danger to the authority of the sovereign and to the very principle of monarchy, would ensue from inaction. Of two evils less mischief seemed likely to arise from a demonstration of the Queen's misconduct, even though it might be accompanied by proof that her husband was far from blameless, than from leaving her, with such an appearance of innocence as the absence of any attempt to prove her criminality would imply, in so prominent a position that the insults offered to her by the avoidance of the nobility who, under other circumstances, would have rejoiced to honour her and themselves by seeking her presence and favour, could not fail in some degree to attach to the King himself.

Not but that even now more than one effort was made, both by them and by others, to arrest the mischief, the greatness of which became each day more and more apparent ; or at least to confine its notoriety to the message which had been sent ; and the first overtures came from the Queen herself. In the House of Lords Lord Liverpool had carried his motion for referring the papers which the King had sent down to a secret committee ; but in the House of Commons the decision on a similar motion had been postponed for a week at the recommendation of Wilberforce, avowedly in the hope that the interval might be so employed as to render the appointment of any committee superfluous. In the debate which had arisen Canning, who, in spite of his position as one of the King's ministers, had been permitted by the King himself to take up a neutral position on the question, had made a speech which had

given her high gratification. While, with the most convincing logic, he justified his colleagues in every part of the arrangements which they had proposed, declaring his conviction that it offered a settlement of the dispute, not only such as they were justified in expecting to be willingly accepted, but "by which the best interests of the Crown and of the country, and the tranquillity of the Queen herself, would have been most truly consulted;" he at the same time declared that "towards her Majesty (if he might without impropriety use so ardent a term) he felt an unaltered regard and affection. He avowed that he would never place himself in the situation of her public accuser, and expressed his fervent wish that she might pass through the approaching ordeal triumphantly." And the cheers with which his speech, and Wilberforce's motion for the adjournment of the debate had been received, prompted her for a moment to hesitate in the course which she had taken. She had been gratified also by the events of her progress from Dover to London, which had rather resembled a triumphal procession than the journey of one whose character and fortunes were at stake on its issue, and already trembling in the balance. Addresses expressing "profound veneration and respect" were presented to her as Queen at Dover and at Canterbury. Into the great archiepiscopal city she was conducted by a splendid procession of torch-bearers. The church bells of the different villages rang out a welcome as she drove through: in spite of the rain, which fell heavily, more than once the horses were taken from her carriage that the people themselves might forward her on her road by their own exertions. And it was amid a denser crowd and more unanimous cheers than had been heard since the visit of the sovereigns, that she entered London, bearing herself with dignity, and, with a decorous substitution of apparent courtesy for the defiance which was in her heart, replying to the people's salutations by demanding cheers for her husband also.

Such a reception apparently led her to flatter herself that the ministers would feel compelled to grant her demands, for she did not wish—it was impossible, under all the circumstances of the King's unalterable estrangement, that she should wish—to remain in England, if she could obtain such conditions as should secure her honorable recognition abroad. And with these feelings, while she sent a message to the House of Commons, protesting “the utmost readiness to meet her accusers, and to court the fullest enquiry into her conduct,” she at the same time commanded Mr. Brougham to write to Lord Liverpool a brief note “to inform him that she had directed her most serious attention to the declared sense of Parliament as to the propriety of some amicable adjustment of existing differences being attempted ; and that, submitting to that high authority with the gratitude due to the protection she had always received from it, she no longer waited for a communication from the ministers of the Crown, but commanded him to announce her own readiness to consider any arrangement that could be suggested consistent with her dignity and honour.” Lord Liverpool's reply was courteous and conciliatory ; he assured her that “the King's servants would still think it their duty, notwithstanding all that had passed, to receive for consideration any suggestion which her Majesty or her advisers might have to offer ;” but reminded her that she had not as yet returned any answer to the proposals made to her in the memorandum of the 15th of April. And then, for the first time, he learnt that that document had never been seen by her till that day. The Queen, in reply, informed him that “the memorandum of April 15, 1820, which the proposition made through Lord Hutchinson appeared to supersede, had been now submitted to her for the first time.” As the letter is in the handwriting of Mr. Brougham, it is fair to assume this allusion to Lord Hutchinson's informal proposal to have been the excuse on which he now relied for having omitted to deliver the paper previously, of

which it is enough to say that, as an excuse, it is not altogether compatible with the reason which he alleged in the House of Commons, that he had been prevented from delivering it "by strange unaccountable accidents of which no one who was not on the spot could form any idea," and which seemed intended to imply that, when he found the Queen at St. Omer, he was encountered by an influence superior to his own. The letter, however, proceeded to express the Queen's dissatisfaction with the proposal thus tendered to her. In her eyes it did not come up to the indispensable condition of being "consistent with her dignity and honour." Still, as she "acquitted those who made the proposal of intending anything offensive to her, and as Lord Liverpool's letter indicated a disposition to receive any suggestion which she might offer, she retained the idea of submitting her own wishes to the authority of Parliament, now so decisively interposed. But she felt it necessary, before making any further proposal, to have it understood that the recognition of her rank and privileges as Queen must be the basis of any arrangement which could be made. The moment that basis was established she would be ready to suggest a method by which she conceived all existing differences might be satisfactorily adjusted."

Lord Liverpool in reply explained to her Majesty that the proposal of an amicable arrangement was in itself a recognition of her rights and privileges as Queen. To ask her to abstain from exercising them in one or two instances was widely different from requiring her "to renounce" them. In point of fact, "whatever appertained to her Majesty by law must continue to appertain to her so long as it was not abrogated by law." He was still willing to receive any proposal from Her Majesty, but "thought it right, in order to save time, distinctly to state that any proposition which he and his colleagues could feel it to be consistent with their duty to recommend to his Majesty, must have for its basis her Majesty's residence abroad."

The condition here declared to be indispensable was one



which, there can be no question, the Queen was prepared not only to expect but willingly to accept ; but her reply showed how greatly the difficulties of a satisfactory conclusion to the negotiation had been increased by Mr. Brougham's ill-advised retention of the memorandum of April 15. For the excuse which was now made for its not having been delivered to her differed in a most material point from that which had been put forward only two days before. Then the detention had been explained by the statement that "the proposition made by Lord Hutchinson had appeared to supersede it." Now it was justified by the circumstance, not that he had made any proposition at all, but that he was "on the spot prepared to treat with her;" though, as has been seen, that nobleman had expressly stated that he had not been furnished with any formal proposals whatever. The suggestion, however, which the Queen had been advised to make was "to leave everything to the decision of any person or persons of high station and character, whom both parties might concur in naming ; and who should have authority to prescribe the particulars as to residence, patronage, and income, subject of course to the approbation of Parliament."

The proposal was only partially accepted. Had it been frankly adopted, supposing indeed that it was made in good faith, it might have saved the nation the painful and shameful scenes of the next four months. But the King was not willing to entrust, even to those most attached to him, full powers to bind him by concessions from which he could not recede. The Queen, on her part, could not be expected to confer on her representatives greater authority than was given by her husband ; accordingly, though the plan of the conference was agreed to, and the Duke of Wellington and Lord Castlereagh on the King's part met Mr. Brougham and Mr. Denman, who was associated with him as her solicitor-general, as the advocates of the Queen's interests, every point raised was taken only to be referred to the principals, or, in the case of the King, to the ministers, and every chance of an amicable arrangement



was thus extinguished from the first. Yet the negotiation broke off on what can hardly be denied to have been a trifle.

The first steps in the negotiation were worthy of the practical wisdom of the ministers by whom they were suggested. It was agreed that the negotiators, "although representing different interests, should consider themselves not as opposed to each other, but as acting in concert with a view to form an arrangement which might avert the necessity of a public enquiry; and secondly, that the arrangement must be of such a character as to require from neither party any concession as to the result to which such enquiry, if proceeded with, might lead. The "Queen must not be understood to admit, or the King to retract anything." And this having been adopted as the governing principle of the whole negotiation, it was also settled that the questions to be determined were four: The future residence of the Queen; the title which she should assume; the income to be assigned to her; and the exercise of certain rights of patronage which it might be desirable that she should leave in abeyance while abroad; (this last sentence being understood to refer to the appointment of high officers of the household, which were manifestly not required by one who did not reside and hold her court in England). The negotiation, however, broke off on a point only by implication involved in any of these questions. The Queen's law officers required that "certain steps should be taken to remove the possibility of any inference being drawn from the Queen's departure to a foreign country, unfavorable to her honour, and inconsistent with that recognition which was the basis of these negotiations; and with this view they suggested the restoration of her name to the Liturgy." On that subject the negotiators on the King's part stated him to be inflexible; they looked, indeed, on such a concession as barred by the original agreement that he was not to be expected "to retract" anything. Mr. Brougham then suggested that her

Majesty might be satisfied with "an official introduction to foreign courts by the King's ministers abroad;" and, after considerable discussion, Lord Castlereagh and the Duke of Wellington proposed, with the desire, "if possible, to meet the Queen's wishes, and in order the better to assure her every suitable respect and attention within the particular state in which she might think fit to establish her residence (the Milanese or the Roman States having been previously suggested by her Majesty's law officers as the alternative within her Majesty's contemplation), that the King should cause official notification to be made of her Majesty's legal character as Queen to the Government of such state; but (they added) it must rest with the sovereign of such state what reception should be given to her Majesty in that character." They further offered the Queen the use of a royal yacht or a ship of war for her departure, if she desired to cross to a port on the other side of the Channel, or at once to the Mediterranean. And, in reply to a question put by Mr. Brougham, they further declared, after consultation with the rest of the Cabinet, that "they saw no objection to a proposal which he had made, that both Houses should express by address to the Queen as well as to the King their grateful acknowledgments for the facilities which their Majesties had respectively afforded towards the accomplishment of an arrangement by which Parliament had been saved the necessity of so painful a discussion."

Such an address would certainly have been in itself an ample recognition of her position by the highest authority known to the law, and the rejection of all these offers can hardly fail to lead to the inference that the Queen was resolved from the first to evade all terms of accommodation, and that her real object in proposing the discussion had been merely to win supporters among the people by professions of a willingness to treat. Indeed, on the point for which the Queen and her agents most strenuously contended, the special mention of her in the prayers of the

Liturgy, the ground was completely cut from under Mr. Brougham's feet by Lord Castlereagh, in a debate which took place shortly after the rupture of the conferences, and in which the Secretary of State showed that the rule of naming persons of her rank had never been invariable; for Prince George of Denmark had not been named, nor the Queen of George I. The other demand places the resolution of her Majesty to find a pretext for disagreement in a still clearer light. Her advisers required that the British ambassador in any country which she might select for her residence should introduce her to the sovereign to whom he was accredited: and, when the ministers consented that he should at once notify her arrival and her rank to the proper authorities, they could fairly urge that the personal presentation which she asked for was contrary to the usual etiquette of courts, and even derogatory to the rank of a sovereign, who needs no such introduction. The difference between the two modes of proceeding was certainly too slight to awaken any feeling save one of deep regret that on such a trifle should depend the laying in oblivion or baring to the public gaze so grievous and perilous a scandal as that which for the rest of the year filled all rightly thinking persons with sorrow and shame, and humiliated both monarch and nation.

When it became known that the Queen had thus broken off the negotiation, one more attempt to withdraw this unhappy quarrel from the public gaze was made by that member of the House of Commons who was preeminently entitled to be listened to on a question of morality and virtue, Mr. Wilberforce. Before the end of the week in which the unsuccessful termination of the Conferences had been announced to Parliament, he moved a couple of resolutions, the first of which expressed the deep regret with which the Commons had heard of their failure; while the second recorded the deliberate opinion of the House that, "when such large advances had been made towards an amicable and final adjustment of the present

unhappy differences, her Majesty, by yielding to the earnest solicitude of the House of Commons and forbearing to press further the adoption of those propositions on which any material difference of opinion yet remained, would by no means be understood to indicate any wish to shrink from enquiry, but would only be deemed to afford a renewed proof of the desire which she had been graciously pleased to express, to submit her own wishes to the authority of Parliament." The resolutions therefore implored the Queen to accept the terms which had been offered her, and pledged the House to put the most favorable construction on her acceptance of them. They were carried by the overwhelming majority of 391 to 124. But the Queen by this time had taken her resolution too firmly to be moved by any remonstrance or any entreaty. The question to what conditions she would agree was one, she replied, which "must be decided by her own feelings and conscience, and by them alone;" and that "as an accused and injured Queen she owed it to the King, to herself, and to all her fellow-subjects, not to consent to the sacrifice of any essential privilege, or to withdraw her appeal to those principles of public justice which are alike the safeguard of the highest and the humblest individual."

The spirit which dictated the answer was probably that of Alderman Wood; its language was undoubtedly that of Mr. Brougham, who must have drawn the answer with a heavy heart, for he had pledged himself to Wilberforce that the Queen would accede to the address.<sup>1</sup> And indeed the very speech which he had made in the debate, enumerating, with high self-congratulation, the advantages which he conceived she had gained from the recent conference; "that it had been explicitly acknowledged that the only basis on

<sup>1</sup> "She will accede to your address," he wrote to Mr. Wilberforce (June 22), "I pledge myself." (*Life of Wilberforce*, v. 65.) And in the preceding page a letter of Wilberforce himself says: "Give me credit, however, for not assuring you on light grounds that the Queen's chief law officer recommended acquiescence."



which her Majesty could be called upon to treat was that high ground of her unimpeachable and unsuspected title of Queen of this realm ;" that "a royal yacht or a man-of-war had been placed at her disposal ;" and, above all, that "the ministers were now willing to move an address to her and to her consort, both to be worded in the same terms, 'We your Majesty's most faithful subjects,' " plainly showed his own opinion to be that, substantially, she had obtained a recognition which, if not all to which she was entitled, was at least such as she might acquiesce in without degradation. That, therefore, for all the scandal which followed, with all its calamitous results to her character, her peace of mind, and eventually her life, she herself is mainly responsible and culpable, is not only clear to all impartial judges, but was evidently his own opinion. The probability seems to be that, feeling that it would be easy for her to prove that originally she had been most grossly and undeservedly ill-treated, she flattered herself that her injuries could be put in so strong a light as to induce the people to overlook every other consideration. Her decision materially altered Mr. Brougham's own position. Hitherto he had been looking at the question partly as her legal adviser, but partly also, and it may be said equally, as a member of Parliament. From this time forth he had to divest himself of the latter character, and to consider himself solely the legal conductor of her case. The consummate ability and energy which he displayed in the performance of his professional duty are universally acknowledged, but those who would now examine the question, and take his speeches among their guides, must remember that, however well founded may be his complaints of her original ill-treatment, when he dilates upon the cruelty which now dragged her before a public tribunal he is using arguments or availing himself of topics calculated indeed to make an impression on his hearers, and still more on the public out of doors, but in reality at variance with his own recorded convictions.



## CHAPTER XXV.

The Queen presents a petition to the House of Lords—Her counsel are heard at the Bar—Lord Grey's motion—Lord Liverpool's defence of the Cabinet—Report of the Committee—Investigation of the Queen's conduct—General management of the transaction by Lord Liverpool—The Queen's letter to the King—Lord Liverpool's private opinion, as shown in letters to Lord Kenyon and Canning—Withdrawal of the Bill of Pains and Penalties—Exultation of the Queen—Lord Liverpool's letter to Wilberforce on her position—Canning retires from the ministry—Motions are made in the House of Commons for the insertion of the Queen's name in the Liturgy—The Queen threatens to go to the Drawing Room—She claims to be crowned—She is refused admission to Westminster Abbey—Her death.

THE die, however, was now finally cast. The Queen's answer, which was delivered to the deputation of members who had been appointed to present the address, was reported to the House on the 24th of June; and on Monday, the 26th, the Queen herself took the initiative in the proceedings which her recent decision had rendered inevitable; presenting, through Lord Dacre, a petition to the House of Peers, in which "she declared her perfect readiness to meet every charge affecting her honour, and challenged the most complete investigation of all her conduct. She was" even "anxious that there should be no delay whatever in finishing the enquiry." But she reminded the House that "her defence must obviously rest upon evidence which for some weeks could not reach this country. The moment that it arrived she would entreat

the House of Lords to proceed in any way they might think consistent with the ends of justice ; but, in the meantime, and before the first step was taken, she desired to be heard by her counsel at their Lordships' bar, this day, on the subject matter of her petition."

Such a prayer was, almost as a matter of course, acceded to ; Mr. Brougham and his coadjutors were at once introduced into the House, and requested a delay of two months to enable them to procure from the countries in which the Queen had of late resided, witnesses to disprove the accusations which, as had been intimated, would be brought against her, and, what was probably more important to them, to give them time to investigate the previous history and character of those by whose testimony the charges were to be supported. A second request which was urged was that the papers which had been communicated to the House by the King, and which were contained in a bag whose seals were as yet unbroken, should be suffered to remain unopened for the same period. The first demand there could be no question about the propriety of granting. It was equally evident not only that the second could not be supported by argument, but that the reasons against it were invincible. For, till the Secret Committee, which was to examine the papers, had pronounced an opinion upon them, no one had a right to assume that any investigation whatever would be necessary. In fact, Mr. Brougham, in taking it for granted that there must be an enquiry, was unconsciously admitting his conviction that the perusal of those papers would establish a strong *primâ facie* case against his client which it would be necessary for her to refute. However, this demand furnished Lord Grey with a pretext for a motion to dissolve the Secret Committee which had been appointed, without allowing it to meet at all. His speech on this occasion shows how even the most practised speakers lose themselves when encumbered by the consciousness of having undertaken to advocate a weak cause. He began by setting up his own

authority on a point of law against an opinion which had been deliberately expressed by that greatest of lawyers the Lord Chancellor, on the difference in legal criminality between adultery committed by the Queen with a subject of the British Crown or with a foreigner, and he ended with a perfect fury of invective against the ministers, than whose conduct nothing, he declared, could be "more base and contemptible," though the only justification which he alleged for such epithets was to be found in their offer to notify her rank as Queen to a foreign Court, while at the same time they refused her a special mention in the Liturgy. The only really noteworthy passage in his speech was one in which "he protested against another opinion which had gone forth, respecting a supposed ground of vindication which might be set up. This was not a case in which recrimination could be admitted. The offence, if there were any, was of a public nature, and could not be regulated by the rules which applied to cases of private injury."

It had happened on former occasions, as we have seen in more than one instance, that Lord Liverpool was supplied with the materials for an easy triumph by the undignified violence of the assailants of his policy. And he was not less skilful now than in former debates in availing himself of the advantage. Before he applied himself to the particular question, he invoked the attention, which in such a case was equivalent to the censure, of the House, to "one of the most inflammatory attacks that was ever made within the walls of Parliament." Lord Grey had reviled the Cabinet as a "loose, disjointed, and feeble Administration." "The attack," Lord Liverpool replied, "was general; and he was prepared to repel it. He was prepared to appeal from the judgment of the noble lord to the country, to Parliament, and to posterity; and to be tried by them for the conduct pursued by himself and his colleagues for the last eight years. He was willing that their counsels and acts should be

compared with those of the Administration with which the noble earl had been connected. He would ask their lordships what now would have been the state and prospects of the country, if the counsels of the noble earl and his friends had been followed." Passing on from this general rebutting of a general reproach, he applied himself to the question before the House; frankly admitting that "proceedings against the Queen would be an evil; that they would not be undertaken without great inconvenience, and ought not to be prosecuted unless to avoid a still greater inconvenience. Still, the Queen's coming to this country had left the ministers no alternative between allowing her all the honours and privileges of her rank, and placing her in a state of accusation. Their concurrence in the propriety of renewing the attempts at negotiation, proved how gladly they would have avoided the necessity which had been imposed upon them. Still, much as they would have wished to have avoided the investigation, they did not wish to avoid responsibility." Nothing probably contributed more to the success of this long Administration than the manly way in which its chief at all times displayed his willingness to adopt the full responsibility for every measure which was adopted, even when it was notorious that he would abstractedly have preferred some other course. The English people have an instinctive liking for a man who never makes excuses, who never tries to shelter himself by subterfuge or evasion. And no minister who ever addressed Parliament was more free from such meanness. Nor was there ever an occasion on which his habitual resolution and candour was more conspicuous than it was in all the debates on this painful subject.

Lord Grey's argument, as far as it was founded on the possibility that the House of Commons might look upon the conduct imputed to the Queen as forming grounds for an impeachment, since it rested on a denial by that Earl, who was no lawyer, of the law as laid

down by the greatest master of his profession who had ever sat on the woolsack, Lord Liverpool encountered with the brief assertion that he preferred Lord Eldon's opinion ; adding indeed, what was hardly necessary, that every other legal authority who had been consulted agreed with the Chancellor. And in reply to another position laid down by the same speaker, that, "though there was no treason, there might be other great state offences on which their lordships might be required to decide judicially," "he agreed," he said, "so far with the noble Earl ; but, if there existed any crimes of that description, they must be such as were known to the common law of the country, and adultery therefore could not be included in that class. For, though the late Lord Auckland had brought in a bill to remove that offence from the class of civil injuries to that of crimes, he had been unable to carry it. And, while he himself had a seat in that House, he would never endure the doctrine that they had a right to create for a single occasion a crime which did not belong to the law of the land. The consequence was, that the only course applicable to the present case was a legislative one ; it might be a divorce, it might be a bill of pains and penalties, but it must be a legislative proceeding of some kind, and no other. And, if that were admitted, it followed of necessity that there must be a previous enquiry ; while to conduct such enquiry by a secret committee was a measure not only less calculated to excite prejudice in the public mind, but more befitting the extreme delicacy of the subject." His arguments prevailed ; by a majority of more than two to one the committee was directed to proceed with its investigation ; and at the end of a week it presented a report that the documents which had been laid before them "contained charges so deeply affecting, not only the honour of the Queen, but the dignity of the Crown, and the moral feeling and honour of the country, that it was indispensable that they should become the subject of a solemn



enquiry, which it appeared to the Committee might be best effected in the course of a legislative proceeding; the necessity for which they could not but most deeply deplore."

Such a report could produce but one result: and accordingly the next day Lord Liverpool introduced "a bill of pains and penalties" to deprive the Queen of her title, and "of all the prerogatives, rights, privileges, and exemptions appertaining to her as Queen Consort," and also "to dissolve and annul the marriage between her and his Majesty." The latter clause, as it was opposed by many of the bishops on religious grounds, Lord Liverpool at a later period declared himself not unwilling to withdraw; but the first portion of the bill, as it could only be justified by the production of the evidence on which the report of the committee had been founded, gave rise not only to several animated debates, but to that long proceeding generally known as the Queen's trial; though it was not in truth solely or even chiefly in their judicial capacity that the Peers heard the witnesses. They were sitting as legislators also, and, in the opinion of many among them, their duty in that character to decide on what enactment was expedient or becoming legitimately predominated over their judicial opinion of the innocence or guilt of the defendant. Indeed, it was on the political propriety of the conduct of the ministers in proposing such a bill, a question which naturally involved the political propriety of passing it, that the discussions principally turned. The burden of defending the policy of the Government fell, of course, chiefly on the Prime Minister. No statesman has ever had a more arduous task; since, in the first place, it was impossible to deny that the proposed investigation was in itself a deplorable evil; and since it was, at least, equally notorious that the husband of the lady whose purity was impeached could not boast of clean hands. But the manner in which Lord Liverpool bore himself throughout the conflict

greatly raised his reputation as a man fitted to guide the deliberations of the House. He argued legal points with a correctness of judgment and a clearness of expression which extorted high compliments from the most skilful of professional advocates.<sup>1</sup> He harangued the House on the general question with a richness and force of eloquence which won the applause of its most celebrated orator;<sup>1</sup> and conducted the whole proceeding with such unfaltering patience, such unvarying temper and candour, such lofty dignity, and such manifest integrity of purpose, that, even when he finally abandoned the charge, no one ventured to say a word against him personally; and Lord Grey, who reproached the ministers generally with "having given a willing credence to the most exaggerated and unfounded calumnies," could find but little support even from his own side of the House, where the majority even of those who had opposed the bill admitted their most unwilling conviction that the accusations had had been only too abundantly proved.

It is needless after the lapse of so many years to reproduce any details of so painful and degrading a case. The Queen herself, with a taste for which questionable is too mild a word, was present at a great portion of the investigation, listening to the evidence apparently with more curiosity than shame. The only redeeming point in the progress of enquiry was the brilliancy of the ability

<sup>1</sup> Lord Erskine (July 24) in arguing a legal point, addresses himself principally to the arguments advanced against him by Lord Liverpool, "who always speaks with great ability and skill." So (November 4), after praising a speech of Lord Grey, he says: "The speech which you have just heard from the noble earl behind me, I am ready to say was the best answer which could be given to it." And (August 19) "Earl Grey began by complimenting the noble earl on his most fair and candid statement, and, at the same time most powerful and eloquent appeal to the judgment and feelings of the House." (*Parliamentary Debates*, ii. 725); and (October 5) his words are: "The noble earl, with that propriety which had distinguished his conduct throughout this proceeding, had said," &c.

with which it was conducted by the lawyers on both sides. It may be doubted whether the annals of forensic eloquence have ever recorded a more impressive and powerful appeal to the feelings of the judges than that with which Mr. Brougham opened the defence of his client; or whether a long and complicated case, encumbered with unusual difficulties from the circumstances of nearly all the witnesses being foreigners, imbued with notions and feelings wholly different from those which prevail on such subjects in this country, has ever been more skilfully unravelled and more perspicuously placed before a tribunal than was done in this instance by the Attorney-General, and still more by the Solicitor-General, Sir John Copley, better known by the title, to which his talents subsequently raised him, of Lord Lyndhurst: Mr. Brougham's exertions being the more admirable because they were dictated solely by his sense of professional duty; and in no respect by his confidence in his client, who, even while he was thus devoting all his powers to her service, not only displayed but little reliance on his judgment, but treated him and his colleagues in her service with but scanty courtesy.<sup>1</sup> After one or two delays, necessary to show the

<sup>1</sup> The following curious letter to Lord Liverpool from Mr. Arbuthnot, Secretary to the Treasury, without date, but written apparently towards the end of July, shows very plainly how completely the Queen was used by Alderman Wood as a mere tool to further his own jobs; and how little, in the violence of her self-will, she would have been inclined to be guided even by him if she had not felt herself in his power:

*"Private and confidential."*

*"Downing Street, Monday night."*

*"DEAR LORD LIVERPOOL,*

*"Brougham took me into the Speaker's room to-night, to speak to me about the money which is to be advanced to Vizard for the expense of witnesses, &c. He begged me to press it very strongly that Vizard ought to be made accountable for all the money which he may receive, and that he should be restricted to payments for counsel, for attorneys, and for witnesses; and he added that Vizard should be under the obligation of either making all the payments himself, or of making them through persons for whom he will be answerable. The*

perfect fairness of the proceeding, the second reading of the Bill was proposed on the 17th of August. And after

object, he said, of these precautions was to prevent the Queen getting hold of the money, and of giving it to Wood, or of using it for other improper purposes. She had, he told me, already spent 8,500*l.* since she had been in London, and without seeming to have incurred any one considerable expense. What she had done with the money he could not guess ; but he thought it not unlikely that she had been plundered by Wood and others, and he was quite sure that she would get a great deal from Vizard unless he were strictly bound to responsibility in his payments.

“ Brougham leaves London to-morrow evening, and he begs earnestly that this business may be settled before he goes, and that I may inform him of the determination of the Government upon it. He entreated that his communication to me might not transpire, and this I promised. Before I quitted him, I could not help adverting to the extraordinary footing upon which he must be with the Queen : it appearing to be quite impossible, from what he had said to me, that either he or Denman could act with her confidentially. He assured me that they never saw her, except when it became necessary for the defence ; that her treatment of her legal advisers exonerated them from all responsibility, whatever might be the result of the trial ; and that they had formed the determination of resigning, in case she attempted, through Wood or others, to interfere with them in their legal proceedings.

“ He understands that, since Wood declared at Guildhall that he would not vote a shilling for her if she left the country, she has taken a great aversion to him ; and that, relying as she does upon the mob, she does not know how to do without him.

“ In walking from the House, I mentioned, in strict confidence to Lord Castlereagh, all that I have here related. He advises that a Treasury Minute should be drawn up immediately, subjecting Vizard to the same regulations as bind our own solicitor, and ordering him to pass his accounts before the auditors. Castlereagh also wishes that we would ascertain from Coutts the exact sum that the Queen has spent.

“ I feel myself under an obligation to Brougham not to let it be known, except by you and Lord Castlereagh, that he has talked with me. He may have his own objects, but I am sure we ought to attend to his suggestions.

“ I have the beginning of a cold, which I wish to guard against, and therefore I may not be with you very early to-morrow morning. It is on this account that I have now put you in possession of what I heard from Brougham, and, perhaps, you will think it right to send



three weeks had been devoted to a most rigorous examination of all the witnesses on whose testimony the report of the Committee had been founded, an adjournment for three weeks more took place, to give the lawyers to whom the Queen had entrusted her cause all the leisure which they could require to frame their defence, and to collect evidence to rebut or throw doubts on the statements already made. During the interval between the first and second reading of the bill the Queen herself took a step designed to arrest the proceedings, or rather (for it is difficult to suppose that she really expected her appeal to be listened to) to put on record in a way that should make the King himself a party to the act, all the grievances of which she had to complain from the first moment of her marriage. She addressed the following letter to the King himself:

Brandenbourg House, the 7th of August, 1820.

SIR,

After the unparalleled and unprovoked persecution which during a series of years has been carried on against me, under the name and authority of your Majesty, and which persecution, instead of being mollified by time, time has rendered only more and more malignant and unrelenting, it is not without a great sacrifice of private feeling that I now, even in the way of remonstrance, bring myself to address this letter to your Majesty. But, bearing in mind that royalty rests on the

to-morrow morning for Harrison, and to direct him to prepare a Treasury instruction to Vizard. I shall be glad afterwards (and I hope to be with you before twelve) to learn from you what I can communicate to Brougham.

"Ever, dear Lord Liverpool,

"Very sincerely yours,

"C. ARBUTHNOT.

"*P.S.* Brougham told me that Lord Erskine was to move that the second reading should not take place till the 24th of August, this delay being very desirable for all the Queen's (!) legal advisers.

"The Chancellor, he was aware, objected to the delay."



basis of public good, that to this paramount consideration all others ought to submit, and aware of the consequences that may result from the present unconstitutional, illegal, and hitherto unheard-of proceedings ; with a mind thus impressed, I cannot refrain from laying my grievous wrongs once more before your Majesty, in the hope that the justice which your Majesty may, by evil-minded counsellors, be still disposed to refuse to the claims of a dutiful, faithful, and injured wife, you may be induced to yield to considerations connected with the honour and dignity of your crown, the stability of your throne, the tranquillity of your dominions, the happiness and safety of your just and loyal people, whose generous hearts revolt at oppression and cruelty, and especially when perpetrated by a perversion and a mockery of the laws.

A sense of what is due to my character and sex forbids me to refer minutely to the real causes of our domestic separation, or to the numerous unmerited insults offered me previously to that period ; but, leaving to your Majesty to reconcile with the marriage vow the act of driving by such means a wife from beneath your roof, with an infant in her arms, your Majesty will permit me to remind you that that act was entirely your own, that the separation, so far from being sought for by me, was a sentence pronounced upon me without any cause assigned, other than that of your own inclinations, which, as your Majesty was pleased to allege, were not under your control.

Not to have felt, with regard to myself, chagrin at this decision of your Majesty would have argued great insensibility to the obligations of decorum ; not to have dropped a tear on the face of that beloved child, whose future sorrows were then but too easy to foresee, would have marked me as unworthy of the name of mother ; but not to have submitted to it without repining would have indicated a consciousness of demerit, or a want of those feelings which belong to insulted female honour.

The "tranquil and comfortable society" tendered to me by your Majesty, formed in my mind but a poor compensation for the grief occasioned by considering the wound given to public morals in the fatal example produced by the indulgence of

your Majesty's inclinations; more especially when I contemplated the disappointment of the nation who had so munificently provided for our union, who had fondly cherished such pleasing hopes of happiness arising from that union, and who had hailed it with such affectionate and rapturous joy.

But, alas! even tranquillity and comfort were too much for me to enjoy. From the very threshold of your Majesty's mansion the mother of your child was pursued by spies, conspirators, and traitors, employed, encouraged, and rewarded to lay snares for the feet, and to plot against the reputation and life of her whom your Majesty had so recently and so solemnly vowed to honour, to love, and to cherish.

In withdrawing from the embraces of my parents, in giving my hand to the son of George III. and the heir-apparent to the British throne, nothing less than a voice from heaven would have made me fear injustice or wrong of any kind. What, then, was my astonishment at finding that treasons against me had been carried on and matured, perjuries against me had been methodized and embodied, a secret tribunal had been held, a trial of my actions had taken place, and a decision had been made upon those actions, without my having been informed of the nature of the charge, or of the names of the witnesses; and what words can express the feelings excited by the fact that this proceeding was founded on a request made, and on evidence furnished, by order of the father of my child, and my natural as well as legal guardian and protector.

Notwithstanding, however, the unprecedented conduct of that tribunal, conduct which has since undergone, even in Parliament, severe and unanswered animadversions, and which has been also censured in Minutes of the Privy Council; notwithstanding the secrecy of the proceedings of this tribunal; notwithstanding the strong temptation to the giving of false evidence against me before it; notwithstanding that there was no opportunity afforded me of rebutting that evidence; notwithstanding all these circumstances, so decidedly favorable to my enemies, even this secret tribunal acquitted me of all crime, and thereby pronounced my principal accusers to have been guilty of the grossest perjury. But it was now (after the trial

was over) discovered that the nature of the tribunal was such as to render false swearing before it not legally criminal. And thus, at the suggestion and request of your Majesty, had been created to take cognizance of and try my conduct a tribunal competent to administer oaths, competent to examine witnesses on oath, competent to try, competent to acquit or condemn, and competent, moreover, to screen those who had sworn falsely against me, from suffering the pains and penalties which the law awards to wilful and corrupt perjury. Great as my indignation naturally must have been at this shameful evasion of law and justice, that indignation was lost in pity for him who could lower his princely plumes to the dust, by giving his countenance and favour to the most conspicuous of those abandoned and notorious perjurers.

Still there was one whose upright mind nothing could warp, in whose breast injustice never found a place, whose hand was always ready to raise the unfortunate and to rescue the oppressed. While that good and gracious father and sovereign remained in the exercise of his royal functions his unoffending daughter-in-law had nothing to fear. As long as the protecting hand of your late ever-beloved and ever-lamented father was held over me, I was safe. But the melancholy event which deprived the nation of the active exertions of its virtuous King bereft me of friend and protector, and of all hope of future tranquillity and safety. To calumniate your innocent wife was now the shortest road to royal favour, and to betray her was to lay the sure foundation of boundless riches and titles of honour. Before claims like these, talent, virtue, long services, your own personal friendships, your royal engagements, promises and pledges, written as well as verbal, melted, vanished into thin air. Your Cabinet was founded on this basis. You took to your councils men of whose persons, as well as whose principles, you had invariably expressed the strongest dislike. The interests of the nation, and even your own feelings in all other respects, were sacrificed to the gratification of your desire to aggravate my sufferings and ensure my humiliation. You took to your councils and your bosom men whom you hated, whose abandonment of and whose readiness to sacrifice me were their only merits, and whose power has been exercised

in a manner, and has been attended with consequences, worthy of its origin. From this unprincipled and unnatural union have sprung the manifold evils which this nation has to endure, and which present a mass of misery and degradation, accompanied with acts of tyranny and cruelty, rather than have seen which inflicted on his industrious, faithful, and brave people, your royal father would have perished at the head of that people.

When to calumniate, revile, and betray me became the sure paths to honours and riches, it would have been strange indeed if calumniators, revilers, and traitors had not abounded. Your Court became much less a scene of polished manners and refined intercourse than of low intrigue and scurrility. Spies, Bacchanalian tale-bearers, and foul conspirators swarmed in those palaces which had before been the resort of sobriety, virtue, and honour. To enumerate all the various privations and mortifications which I had to endure, all the insults that were wantonly heaped upon me, from the day of your elevation to the Regency to that of my departure for the Continent, would be to describe every personal offence that can be offered to, and every pain short of bodily violence that can be inflicted on, any human being. Bereft of parents, brother, and father-in-law, and having my husband for my deadliest foe ; seeing those who had promised me support brought by rewards to be amongst my enemies ; restrained from accusing my foes in the face of the world out of regard for the character of the father of my beloved child, and from a desire to prevent her happiness from being disturbed ; shunned, from motives of selfishness, by those who were my natural associates ; living in obscurity while I ought to have been the centre of all that was splendid ; even thus humbled I had one consolation left, the love of my dear and only child. To permit me to enjoy this was too great an indulgence. To see my daughter, to fold her in my arms, to mingle my tears with hers, to receive her cheering caresses, and to hear from her lips assurances of never-ceasing love : thus to be comforted, consoled, upheld and blessed, was too much to be allowed to me. Even on the slave mart the cries of " Oh, my mother, my mother ! Oh, my child, my child ! " have prevented a

separation of the victims of avarice. But your advisers, more inhuman than the slave-dealer, remorselessly tore the mother from the child.

Thus bereft of the society of my child, or reduced to the necessity of embittering her life by struggles to preserve that society, I resolved on a temporary absence, in the hope that time might restore me to her in happier days. Those days, alas ! were never to come. To mothers, and those mothers who have been suddenly bereft of the best, and most affectionate, and only daughters, it belongs to estimate my sufferings and my wrongs. Such mothers will judge of my affliction upon hearing of the death of my child, and upon my calling to recollection the last look, the last words, and all the affecting circumstances of our separation. Such mothers will see the depths of my sorrows. Every being with a heart of humanity in its bosom will drop a tear in sympathy with me. And will not the world then learn with indignation that this event, calculated to soften the hardest heart, was the signal for new conspiracies and indefatigable efforts for the destruction of this afflicted mother? Your Majesty had torn my child from me ; you had deprived me of the power of being at hand to succour her ; you had taken from me the possibility of hearing her last prayers for her mother ; you saw me bereft, forlorn, and broken-hearted, and this was the moment you chose for redoubling your persecutions.

Let the world pass its judgment on the constituting of a commission in a foreign country, consisting of inquisitors, spies, and informers, to discover, collect, and arrange matters of accusation against your wife, without any complaint having been communicated to her ; let the world judge of the employing of ambassadors in such a business, and of the enlisting of foreign courts in the enterprise ; but as to the measures which have been adopted to give final effect to these preliminary proceedings, it is for me to speak ; it is for me to remonstrate with your Majesty ; it is for me to protest ; it is for me to apprise you of my determination.

I have always demanded a fair trial. This is what I now demand, and this is refused me. Instead of a fair trial, I am to be subjected to a sentence by the Parliament, passed upon



me in the shape of a law. Against this I protest, and upon the following grounds.

The injustice of refusing me a clear and distinct charge, of refusing me the names of the witnesses, of refusing me the names of the places where the alleged acts have been committed; these are sufficiently flagrant and revolting; but it is against the constitution of the court itself that I particularly object, and against that I most solemnly protest.

Whatever may be the precedents as to bills of pains and penalties, none of them, except those relating to the queens of Henry VIII., can apply here; for here your Majesty is the plaintiff. Here it is intended to absolve your Majesty from the marriage vow. Here it is intended by the bill, to do you what you deem good, and to do me great harm. You are therefore a party, and the only complaining party.

You have made your complaint to the House of Lords. You have conveyed to this House written documents sealed up. A secret committee of the House has examined these documents; they have reported that there are grounds of proceeding, and then the House, merely upon that report, has brought forward a bill, containing the most outrageous slanders on me, and sentencing me to divorce and degradation.

The injustice of putting forth this bill to the world for six weeks before it is even proposed to afford me an opportunity of contradicting its allegations, is too manifest not to have shocked the nation; and, indeed, the proceedings, even thus far, are such as to convince every one that no justice is intended me. But if none of these proceedings, if none of these clear indications to do me wrong had taken place, I should see, in the constitution of the House of Lords itself, a certainty that I could expect no justice at its hands.

Your Majesty's ministers have advised this prosecution; they are responsible for the advice they give; they are liable to punishment if they fail to make good their charges; and not only are they part of my judges, but it is they who have brought in the bill; and it is too notorious, that they have always a majority in the House,—so that, without any other, here is ample proof that the House will decide in favour of the bill, and, of course, against me.

But further, there are reasons for your ministers having a majority in this case, and which reasons do not apply to common cases. Your Majesty is the plaintiff: to you it belongs to appoint and to elevate peers. Many of the present peers have been raised to that dignity by yourself, and almost the whole can be, at your will and pleasure, further elevated. The far greater part of the peers hold, by themselves and their families, offices, pensions, and other emoluments, solely at the will and pleasure of your Majesty, and these, of course, your Majesty can take away whenever you please. There are more than four-fifths of the peers in this situation, and there are many of them who might thus be deprived of the far better part of their incomes.

If, contrary to all expectation, there should be found in some peers, likely to amount to a majority, a disposition to reject the bill, some of these peers may be ordered away to their ships, regiments, governments, and other duties; and, which is an equally alarming power, new peers may be created for the purpose, and give their vote on the decision. That your Majesty's ministers would advise these measures, if found necessary to render their prosecution successful, there can be very little doubt, seeing that they have hitherto stopped at nothing, however unjust or odious.

To regard such a body as a court of justice would be to calumniate that sacred name; and for me to suppress an expression of my opinion on the subject would be tacitly to lend myself to my own destruction, as well as to an imposition upon the nation and the world.

In the House of Commons I can discover no better grounds of security. The power of your Majesty's ministers is the same in both Houses; and your Majesty is well acquainted with the fact, that a majority of this House is composed of persons placed in it by the peers and by your Majesty's Treasury.

It really gives me pain to state these things to your Majesty, and, if it give your Majesty pain, I beg that it may be observed and remembered, that the statement has been forced from me. I must either protest against this mode of trial, or, by tacitly consenting to it, suffer my honour to be sacrificed. No inno-

cence can secure the accused, if the judges and jurors be chosen by the accuser; and if I were tacitly to submit to a tribunal of this description, I should be instrumental in my own dishonour.

On these grounds I protest against this species of trial. I demand a trial in a court where the jurors are taken impartially from amongst the people, and where the proceedings are open and fair. Such a trial I court, and to no other will I willingly submit. If your Majesty persevere in this proceeding, I shall, even in the Houses of Parliament, face my accusers; but I shall regard any decision they make against me as not in the smallest degree reflecting on my honour; and I will not, except compelled by actual force, submit to any sentence which shall not be pronounced by a court of justice.

I have now frankly laid before your Majesty a statement of my wrongs, and declaration of my views and intentions. You have cast upon me every slur to which the female character is liable. Instead of loving, honouring, and cherishing me, agreeably to your solemn vow, you have pursued me with hatred and scorn, and with all the means of destruction. You wrested from me my child, and with her my only comfort and consolation. You sent me sorrowing through the world, and even in my sorrows pursued me with unrelenting persecution. Having left me nothing but my innocence, you would now, by a mockery of justice, deprive me even of the reputation of possessing that. The poisoned bowl and the poignard are means more manly than perjured witnesses and partial tribunals, and they are less cruel, inasmuch as life is less valuable than honour. If my life would have satisfied your Majesty, you should have had it on the sole condition of giving me a place in the same tomb with my child; but since you would send me dishonoured to the grave, I will resist the attempt with all the means that it shall please God to give me.

CAROLINE R.

*To HIS MAJESTY THE KING.*

The letter was returned unopened. Nor, had it been received, did it contain anything calculated to induce either King or ministers to change a course which had

been deliberately decided on. As a half-recriminatory attack on the King himself it was superfluous ; for of his conduct no one could justify a single particle. A justification of the writer it could not be, for that could only be accomplished by evidence ; and the sneers at the dependence and servility of the two Houses of Parliament were misplaced, unreasonable, and wholly disproved by their conduct throughout the whole transaction.

It has been mentioned that before the abandonment of the bill Lord Liverpool expressed himself willing to withdraw the clause which went to annul the marriage. The very first time that it was mentioned in Parliament he assured the House, in reply to a statement that the King's chief object was to marry again, that "he believed no such feeling had entered into the mind of his Majesty ; and that, for himself and those who acted with him, he could state that that provision was the part of the bill to which the least value was attached." But the following letter shows that his own feeling was that the divorce would have been entirely justifiable. Lord Kenyon, one of the most habitual supporters of his general policy, had sent him a frank exposition of the difficulty which he should feel in giving relief to a husband whose own conduct lay open to such reproaches as that of George IV., and Lord Liverpool was naturally solicitous to remove his scruples.

*Private.*

Fife House, July 8th, 1820.

MY DEAR LORD,

I could certainly wish that before you definitely decided on so important a matter as that to which your letter refers you would hear what is to be said on both sides. I wish this the more as an immediate decision cannot be necessary.

The dissolution of the marriage in the bill is a *consequence*. As such, it may be open for Parliament to decide upon it when they come into the committee, and it would not affect or materially alter the other provisions of the bill, which is a bill of pains and penalties.



I doubt, however, the validity of your reasoning. I need not say that I admit the position, that though the laws of man may be different as respects sovereigns and other individuals, the laws of God must bear equally upon all. It is the law of God that the marriage contract can only be entirely dissolved in consequence of adultery. This must apply to the King as to any other individual, and however heinous the conduct of the Queen may have been, if the fact of adultery cannot be proved as in other cases I will not vote for the divorce. But I can find nothing in the law of God or the New Testament that gives the woman necessarily a right to recriminate.

In the case of a private individual the question of divorce is a question of personal relief. The law of man, not the law of God, says properly in this case, we will not give you the relief unless by your conduct you are entitled to it. But the King does not, and cannot, apply for relief as an individual: his accusation is a public accusation, resting on public grounds.

Adultery in a queen is a crime against the State. The private offence is merged in the public crime, and must follow the effect of it. How is it possible to entertain a charge of recrimination against a king, who in the eye of the law can do no wrong?

If the charge cannot be entertained by evidence, how can you know the fact? Certainly not by surmises or reports. The charge therefore cannot be made, and still less can it be presumed; but if it were true, it does not alter the moral guilt of the woman, and even if the individual were not entitled to relief, the State has a right to such relief in a case in which it may even be supposed that such relief may be of the utmost national importance.

You refer to the law of England upon the subject of divorce generally; but recollect, the law of England does not allow of the dissolution of the marriage contract. Every private divorce bill is a special law *pro tanto* in derogation of the law of England.

It is a law of special relief in a particular case, and I can see no reason why Parliament, in making such special law, may not vary the conditions as applied to the distinct cases of sovereign



and individual, provided such variation is not inconsistent with the law of God.

By the law of God adultery must be proved in the woman to justify any human act on this subject; but I again repeat I know of no right under such law that the woman can have to recriminate.

Believe me, &c.

To LORD KENYON.

LIVERPOOL.

To a candid consideration it will probably appear, that while the divorce could certainly only be defended on the grounds thus laid down, they are also in fact the only grounds on which any part of the proceedings could be justified. The King was not to be relieved from such a wife, but the nation was to be spared the degradation of acknowledging such a queen. Another letter is still more interesting, giving, as it does, the writer's confidential opinion of the whole matter, during the interval which elapsed between the closing of the case for the bill and the opening of the defence, to Canning; who had gone abroad, with the permission of the King and of his colleagues, to avoid being mixed up in a transaction in which considerations of private feeling prevented him from co-operating, while his sense of public duty equally forbade him to attempt to frustrate it.

*Most private and most confidential.*

Fife House, September 12th, 1820.

MY DEAR CANNING,

You must forgive me for not having written sooner; but in the whole course of my life I do not recollect to have undergone such continued fatigue as during the three weeks of the proceedings in the House of Lords.

The case for the bill is now closed, and we have adjourned till the 3d of October, on which day Brougham will open the defence. I will endeavour to put you in possession as briefly as I can of the state of the business at this time.

**In** the first place, the proceeding worked much easier than could have been imagined. The interpreter was a very intelligent man, and the Italian witnesses, even those of low condition, were, in the opinion of all the judges, superior to those in the corresponding classes of life who are usually brought before the tribunals in this country.

**I** cannot give you a stronger proof of this than that out of twenty-six witnesses subjected to as severe cross-examinations as ever took place in a court of justice, and afterwards to a very minute examination from the Peers, there were only two whose credit or character were at all shaken upon these examinations. The two I have excepted were certainly material witnesses, and it is impossible to say what upon enquiry may be brought against the others; but they went through the ordeal of the court with perfect credit, and most of them without any embarrassment.

The case as now proved on the part of the accusation is certainly a very strong one, and, though detached facts may be contradicted, it will be very difficult to repel the material and leading points.

There are, however, some important witnesses on the other side if they dare to call them; but the Queen's counsel are certainly in a dilemma respecting some of these witnesses. If they forbear calling them this very circumstance must be fatal to their cause. On the other hand, it is almost impossible to tell a lie in a court of justice with consistency, and if a middle course should be adopted, and these witnesses should mean to say what was partly true, but not the whole truth, there would always be the hazard of a word too much defeating the whole purpose; independent of the risk to which their credit and character will be exposed when they come to be cross-examined.

Lord Grey told the Chancellor that Brougham meant to set up impotency as part of his defence, and that he should bring several Italian surgeons to prove it; observe, not original impotency, but impotency in consequence of an operation. It is difficult to believe the fact, and if the fact should be made out, it will be a curious question how it is to operate upon the proceeding.

I have no idea that the further proceeding at the bar of the House of Lords can last more than ten or fourteen sitting days ; allow then a week or ten days for the debates upon the bill ; and if the bill should be carried, it will have passed our House, and may be sent to the House of Commons by the end of October. There appears to me, therefore, to be no reason why the whole proceeding should not be brought to a termination before Christmas.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

We see from this letter how unfounded, in the opinion of so fair and candid an observer, was the prejudice against the veracity of the foreign witnesses, taken as a body. But at the moment the clamour against them was almost universal, and though the House of Commons only sat for a couple of days during the time that the Lords were occupied with the trial,<sup>1</sup> that clamour was re-echoed, chiefly by one or two members of no very high reputation, in the most offensive manner, and seemed to meet with more acquiescence than repudiation.

Eventually, the Peers by a majority of 123 to 95 passed the second reading of the bill ; which was a verdict on their part that the charges which had been brought had been fully proved. But on the third reading the division was so much closer, the numbers being 108 to 99, that (though it was not concealed by many in the minority that they also coincided in the opinion of the Queen's guilt, but that their vote was governed by other considerations) Lord Liverpool withdrew the bill ; which indeed the most decisive majority in the Lords would probably not have persuaded the Commons to pass ; but the success of which was rendered utterly hopeless by so near an approach to equality as the division last exhibited. The populace in general throughout the kingdom received the news of the

<sup>1</sup> The case for the bill was opened August 17th, and summed up September 7th. That for the Queen was opened October 3d, and closed October 30th.

abandonment of the bill with exultation. London, Dublin, Edinburgh, and many of the chief towns were illuminated; and so universal did the reports which reached Paris represent the sympathy with the Queen to be, that Canning wrote to Lord Liverpool in a tone of great alarm for the stability of the Ministry. In some respects the feeling was not unnatural; for, however gross and glaring her misconduct might latterly have been, it could not be denied that she had been grossly and gratuitously ill-treated and insulted by her husband before she had or could have given him the slightest provocation. But whatever feeling there was in her favour she soon extinguished by her own behaviour now. It could be no matter of surprise that she should look on the abandonment of the Bill of Pains and Penalties as a triumph, and even as a certificate of her innocence. But her elation carried her beyond the bounds of reason, and even of decency. She wrote to Lord Liverpool demanding that one of the royal palaces should be assigned for her accommodation, and when the minister in a respectful letter informed her that her request could not be complied with, but that he was prepared to take immediate steps to provide her for the present with such a residence as she herself might select; adding that, till the settlement of a suitable income for her could be submitted to Parliament, he was ready also to direct the Treasury to make her advances of money sufficient for the due maintenance of her position; she not only directed her Chamberlain, Mr. Keppel Craven, to write him a most insulting and contumelious reply, rejecting his offers, charging him and his colleagues with treating both the Parliament and nation with contempt, and with betraying the highest interests of the King himself; but she sent down a message to the House of Commons, complaining to that assembly of the treatment she had received from the ministers, and declaring that she "threw herself with unabated confidence on the representatives of the people, fully relying on their wisdom



and justice to take effectual steps to protect her from the further vexation of unnecessary delay, and to provide that these unexampled persecutions might at length be brought to a close."

The prorogation of Parliament prevented the delivery of this message. But the Queen was not inclined to confine her complaints to so legitimate a channel; a day or two afterwards she announced her intention of attending the morning service at St. Paul's, in order to return public thanks to God for her recent deliverance from the malice of her enemies. The dean would gladly have had the ministers interfere to prevent a profanation designed to convert a church into a theatre for a political demonstration: but they explained to him that there could be no pretext for their interference to prevent her Majesty more than any other individual from attending the ordinary service of the Church, though it was equally plain that no alteration of the words of the Liturgy should be permitted. She was greatly disappointed at the result. On the appointed morning, the 29th of November, she set forth in what she had hoped would prove an imposing procession; but, though a great crowd of pedestrians led the way, they were chiefly representatives of different bodies of artisans; and, though an escort of horsemen surrounded her own carriage, there was but little uniformity in their equipment or appearance. A few of the riders indeed seemed of respectable rank, but the great majority were mounted on drayhorses, on costermonger's ponies, and on animals of every gradation of size between these two extremes. She published, however, a grandiloquent letter of thanks to the committees who had organized the affair; and, being misled, by the cheers which had greeted her at many points of her passage to the City, into a belief that the effect of the late investigation had been permanently to enlist the goodwill and respect of the people in general, she permitted herself to reply to different addresses which were presented to her in language which scarcely fell short of sedition. Intem-

perance such as this, however great the provocation, is always distasteful to the English people: and, within a shorter time than even the wary Lord Chancellor had reckoned on, his prediction was fulfilled, that she would find herself ruined in the opinion of the world.

At first, however, the result of the recent proceedings could not fail to be highly embarrassing to the Administration. It rendered it necessary for them to reconsider the whole question of the treatment which she was to receive, and at the same time made it impossible for them to impose any conditions on her. It was no longer practicable to require her to reside abroad, nor, if she should decide on remaining in this country, could she now be refused the privilege of appointing officers of her household, who must be considered officers of State. The view which Lord Liverpool took of the whole of her position, and which regulated the conduct of the Ministry, he explained at length to Wilberforce:

*Private.*

Fife House, 29th November, 1820.

MY DEAR SIR,

I send you in another cover a copy of my speech on the second reading of the Bill of Pains and Penalties.

You will observe that, in discussing the question, I have put out of consideration every fact that could be matter of doubt. I have rested my argument and opinion solely on the uncontradicted and uncontrovertible facts of the case. These are sufficient, I am satisfied, to furnish not only a moral conviction of guilt, but a judicial presumption of it according to the established principles of our courts, ecclesiastical as well as civil. In this opinion I know I am supported by all the first judicial authorities.

Having said thus much on this point, I have been desirous of writing to you for the purpose of explaining the view which I take of what ought to be the proceedings in Parliament when we meet at Christmas.

The bill in the House of Lords passed the second reading. The

preamble was agreed to, with some immaterial alterations, in the committee.

The bill then passed the third reading, but, in consequence of the smallness of the majority, the further consideration of it was put off for six months, with the intention certainly that a prorogation should put an end to the proceeding during that interval.

Every person who voted for the second reading of the bill must necessarily have done so because they thought the Queen guilty. Many voted against it on grounds of expediency. Some of them have recorded in protests their decided opinion of her guilt ; others made a statement to the same effect on their legs in the House of Lords, and still more have recorded their opinion that innocence is not established.

It may be assumed that a great majority of the House of Lords have in one way or other affirmed the guilt of the Queen ; but still there is no complete proceeding, either legislative or judicial, against her.

Under such circumstances she must continue to enjoy all the lawful rights of Queen. These cannot now be disputed.

With respect to provision, no separate provision is usually made for Queens Consort whilst they remain in that character. Any claim she can have to separate provision must be grounded upon her separation from the King, and even then it must be granted to her through him ; and it will be for Parliament to determine under all the circumstances what the amount of that provision should be. It would be preposterous to say that her former conduct could be overlooked in such a consideration ; but I am ready to admit that, as matters now stand, no condition of residence abroad nor any other stipulation can or ought to be annexed to the grant.

The grant should therefore be unconditional. The amount of it should, in my opinion, be the 50,000*l.* a year to which she would have been entitled on the death of the Prince Regent. Upon this question of amount, however, I am not very solicitous.

The main consideration comes next. She is lawfully Queen, and no attempt should be made to divest her of any of her rights, *strictly legal* ; but, on the other hand, I am most decidedly of opinion that nothing of any kind must be done which can have

any way the effect of doing her honour, beyond her strict legal claims. She cannot on any principle be entitled to claim a residence in any of the ancient royal palaces; and, even if there were no reasons of convenience, or even of practicability against it, I should feel insurmountable difficulties in placing her in any one of them, surrounded, as she will probably be, by persons of the worst character, whether they be foreigners or natives, from whose society and connexion you have no means of estranging her.

But what is most material is the question of placing her name in the Liturgy.

I will not now enter upon the consideration of whether the omission was originally right. It was done upon grounds which were deemed sufficient at the time; but even were I to assume that it would have been better in the first instance to have inserted it as a matter of course, and as a mere ministerial act, it would be impossible now to insert it without, in my judgment, the most fatal consequences to the moral character of the nation both at home and abroad.

She would be considered as having carried all her points. She would be regarded in that case, and in that case only, as completely whitewashed, and, notwithstanding all the admitted facts of her conduct, and the declaration of her guilt by a large majority of the House of Lords, she would be regarded as a character cleared of all taint and reproach.

These considerations derive additional weight from the treasonable letter to the King, and her treasonable and seditious answers to many of the addresses.

The conduct of Parliament in taking such step could be ascribed to nothing but fear, and such manifestation of fear would, as is usual, only add to all our national dangers.

I have no difficulty, therefore, in stating it distinctly, and in wishing it to be understood, that no consideration will induce me to be a party to any such measure. If Parliament should determine upon it, the country must dispense with my humble services. I would rather live in retirement the remainder of my life than give any sanction to a measure which will, I am satisfied, give a deadly blow to the moral character of the nation, and which will be felt after the present heats are over

to the latest posterity as an eternal disgrace to all those who have participated in it.

You will ask me, what then is my own course of policy? I answer :

Some provision must be made for her Majesty. Grant that which is just and reasonable. Grant it without condition. Take no further step or proceeding whatever against her. But, above all, take no step nor proceeding in her favour which is not strictly necessary, but which might have the effect of setting her up and upholding her, after all that has passed, in the eyes of the country and of Europe.

I have thus fairly opened my mind to you on this subject. Let me beg of you to consider what I have said. You are at liberty to show this in confidence to any friend on whose discretion you can rely.

I am, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

The great philanthropist's eyesight was unhappily at this time in such a state that writing was both a pain and a danger to him; and his reply was consequently limited to an acknowledgment of the receipt of the letter and of the speech, which latter he had only been able to "hear through his amanuensis. Yet, even under that great disadvantage, he had thought more highly of it than he would state in writing to the speaker." But a reply to a similar letter from Mr. Stuart Wortley,<sup>1</sup> one of the members for Yorkshire, will be read with interest as showing the opinion formed on the whole case by a politician of conspicuous independence of mind; and one, as was proved by his celebrated motion in 1812, not originally disposed to be a partisan of the existing Ministry.

*Private and confidential.*

Witley Hall, December 18th, 1820.

MY DEAR LIVERPOOL,

I have not answered your letter of the 30th of November earlier, because I was desirous of giving you in the answer the result,

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards Lord Wharncliffe.



not only of my own opinion upon the subjects to which your letter refers, but also that of others in whom I have confidence. I have, however, avoided the being too general in my communications, because I am perfectly aware that the opinions usually given upon these occasions are apt to be such as are supposed to be most agreeable to the person who asks for them, and also because every step *I* take in the county is watched both by my well and ill wishers, and I am therefore anxious that neither you nor I may be in any degree committed to any particular measure by too free a communication to others of what may pass between us. Keeping this in view, I have only shown your letter to two or three persons.

I have read your speech with the greatest attention. I did not want its force to convince me of the Queen's guilt, but I was delighted with the firmness and candour with which you treat the case, and it does you honour both as a man and a minister. How anybody, having such a case before them, could give a vote affirming her innocence, I am quite at a loss to understand, and can only account for some having done so by their intellects having been confounded by speeches, first one way and then the other, as is very apt to be the case with a jury.

That there are some, however, who even now believe in her Majesty's "spotless innocence," is certain, but they are very few in number, and therefore not worth the taking into consideration with regard to future arrangements. But the truth is, and it ought not to be concealed from the King himself, that the minds of a very great proportion of the better sort of people revolt at anything like harshness to the Queen, because they think that it arises from the King's personal feelings towards her, and that his conduct to her from the beginning has left him no right whatever to complain of any part of hers. This is the real cause of the failure of the bill in the House of Lords, and would have made it absolutely impossible to pass it in the House of Commons, where public feeling has, of course, so much more weight. I will not conceal from you, that with this feeling many persons, generally well inclined to support the existing Government from a concurrence in their general line of policy, condemn it for not having been more decided with the King when first the treatment of the Queen was under

consideration, and especially upon the point of the Liturgy. My own opinion is undoubtedly, that, being in possession of the evidence which has now appeared, it would have been very difficult for any ministers to have insisted upon the insertion of the Queen's name as usual, against the personal feeling of the King. But the error which I am inclined to attribute to the Government is the sending out the commission to obtain the evidence ; not upon any idea of that commission having acted improperly in the performance of its duty, but because I think the King should *then* have been told, that an enquiry into the Queen's conduct must originate in a feeling of its necessity upon the part of the people of this country, and not in any belief upon his part of the impropriety of her conduct, of which his own treatment of her from the beginning had completely taken away all right of his complaining personally. I am aware that it may be said in answer to this, that the non-existence of the Milan commission would not have prevented the Queen's coming over to this country, and all the difficulties consequent upon her so coming ; but she would, at least, have been easier to treat with, and the moment she did come and endeavour to force herself to the head of society in this country, a shock would have been given to the feelings of the upper classes, who were quite aware of what she was worth, which would not have failed to have had its effect upon the middle and lower classes, and she would very soon have been held in the estimation she deserves.

You will observe that I say nothing of the right, by law, to omit the Queen's name from the Liturgy. Of course I take for granted that the King and his Government acted from good advice upon that point, and that he had the right to make the alteration as he did.

I have written thus much that you may be aware of the view taken by me, and I believe many others, of what occurred previously to the Queen's arrival in this country. Since that, undoubtedly, her conduct has been such as to rouse every feeling of indignation against her, quite independently of the question of her guilt or innocence. How, then, is she to be treated ?

In determining this question, I should say that the Government

ought to keep in mind the rule by which I think they should be guided, namely, that everything done or omitted respecting the Queen should be done or omitted in deference to the feeling of the better part of the community upon her conduct, and by no means in deference to any personal feelings of the King's. In *this view* then, it is, that I have considered the measures which you say you think the right ones to be pursued.

With regard to the Liturgy I entirely concur with you. It would be an insult to all sense of morality and religion to call upon the people of England to do honour to the Queen in the public prayers after such facts have been proved against her. Nor has she any right to complain; she refused all compromise, and put herself upon her innocence. Unless, therefore, the people of this country, and through them the House of Commons, are satisfied of her innocence, she has lost all *moral* right of being prayed for in the Liturgy. Upon this ground I applaud your determination of giving up your office rather than give way. Retirement upon such grounds will only add to the weight of your character, which now stands so high that I will venture to say that, even if you do retire, you will not remain long out of office. Let me beg of you to put this question upon that issue as soon as practicable after the meeting of Parliament, and I am confident that you, so doing, will do more to strengthen your Government than any other step you can take. I hope your colleagues are equally decided upon this point.

Of the Queen's demand of a palace, if claimed as a right, and as a mark of honour, I should say it ought to be refused; but I am not sure whether there would not be a greater control over her conduct, if placed in one of the palaces, than by letting her take a house where it may be convenient to her. Her Court, if such it can be called, will be equally held elsewhere, and she will be surrounded by the same disreputable persons; and it strikes me that the very circumstance of her being in the King's palace would give the Government a better right to interfere, if she did not go on properly, than if she was living in a hired house. In these days of many difficulties, also, the amount to be paid for the house must not be left out

of consideration when there are so many palaces uninhabited by the royal family. But I can be no judge of the practicability or convenience of placing the Queen in one of the palaces, and I think the point of no great moment either way, unless its being granted or not is considered with reference to right or honour.

The remaining point of your letter is the 50,000*l.* per annum. If given, it ought to be given without condition. Upon that I agree with you. But I have very great doubts whether I shall consent to vote the Queen any such sum of money, although perhaps Government may be right in proposing it. From her conduct since she came to England, we must be blind indeed not to perceive the channel in which this sum will be expended, and to what use it will be put. It is the duty of the House of Commons to be satisfied that they do not vote the money of their constituents to be used as the means of overthrowing the Constitution under which we live ; and the Queen's conduct since she came to England has been such as to make *me* at least fear that it will be so used. If the King was suspected of a desire to overthrow the Establishment of this country, it would be the duty of the House of Commons to prevent it by refusing him the means. Why is it to act differently in the Queen's instance ? Upon this ground I am inclined to think the vote should be annual, and at first by no means so large. And even if you continue to be of your present opinion upon that subject, I am not sure whether I shall not, when the vote is proposed in the House of Commons, move a less sum, and an annuity grant upon the ground I have stated, in order to record my opinion. Upon this, however, we shall have an opportunity of further conversation. There is one circumstance to which I have not alluded, which has made a great impression against the Government with respect to their conduct towards the Queen, and which was mentioned by Brougham in one of his speeches, and has never been contradicted. He stated that no communication was ever made directly to the Queen of her daughter's death, nor of the late King's, both of which events she was left, according to his statement, to learn as she could. I think that I already know enough to convince me that Brougham is not borne out



by facts in these assertions, but I should be very glad to have it in my power to contradict them.

I have thus, my dear Liverpool, given you my opinions upon the matters contained in your letter in the most unreserved and open manner, and it gives me the greatest pleasure to be able so to communicate with you with feelings of confidence and friendship.

I am, ever yours truly,

STUART WORTLEY.

*P.S.* I am glad to tell you that there is every prospect of the county meeting set on foot by the more violent Whigs not coming to anything. The fact is, that our Radicals will not permit them to have it for the purposes for which only they wish it, but insist upon introducing resolutions to pledge the Whigs to reform.

So many members of both Houses, though far from followers of Mr. Wortley, were likely to be of a similar way of thinking, that this expression of opinion from him was very encouraging as to the result of the coming session. And the encouragement was the more valuable because from others, on whose judgment he could not avoid placing a high value, Lord Liverpool received letters of a very different tenour.

As long as the trial was actually pending Canning would not take any step which might bear the appearance of retreating from a post of danger or difficulty: he would not resign his office while his so doing could have been represented as seeking to avoid the responsibility which attached to him as well as to the rest of the Cabinet; but though, by the King's express permission, he had been absent from England during the autumn, it was of course impossible for him, if he continued to preside over the Board of Control, to continue abroad after Parliament had reassembled; and, as he was resolved to take no part in the discussion on the Queen's affairs, of which he anticipated a renewal, he, in the second week of December,



addressed a letter to the King, admitting that Lord Liverpool differed from him on the necessity of the step which he was taking, but formally resigning his office on the ground that his presence as a minister at discussions in which he abstained from taking any share "must produce not only the most painful embarrassment to himself, but the greatest perplexity to his colleagues, and the utmost disadvantage to the conduct of his Majesty's affairs."<sup>1</sup> And, probably to justify to himself in part the resignation in which he thus persisted, he a month afterwards wrote Lord Liverpool two very long letters on the extreme difficulty in which both the Cabinet and the King would find themselves in the ensuing session. He argued strenuously on the impossibility of continuing to refuse the Queen a special mention in the Liturgy, especially if that refusal was to be based on the result of the recent investigation; since, as he contended, "the records of Parliament know nothing of *withdrawing* a bill; if it is not passed, it is practically thrown out by the House, whoever may have suggested the division;" and the final rejection of the bill would be represented as equivalent to a verdict of not guilty. In fact, he thought that it had a right to be so represented; for "a legal process must have a legal issue; that issue, if not condemnation, must be acquittal, and acquittal with all its benefits. Any attempt at a middle course will lead only to fresh perplexities." And he declared that this was not his opinion only, but that of all who wished to embarrass the Government, and of many who did not.

The difficulties, however, which he foresaw arose only in a very modified degree. And for the extrication of the Cabinet from them Lord Liverpool was mainly indebted to the general estimation in which all parties held himself. As Canning wrote on the same subject to Huskisson, "nothing but plain management, or rather the absence of

<sup>1</sup> The whole letter is given by Mr. Stapleton. (George Canning and his Times, 316.)

all management, will suit the crisis ; and happily Liverpool stands in a situation in which *his own word* will carry him through." The Queen herself indeed loudly demanded the restoration of her name to the Liturgy, even sending down by Mr. Brougham a message to the House of Commons that she would accept no pecuniary provision, such as she understood Parliament was prepared to settle on her, till that boon should be granted her. And her partisans in the House of Commons made more than one motion designed to compel the insertion of her name in the daily prayers of the Church. But they were defeated by large majorities ; and, in the House of Lords, the silence of those who in the last session had been her most influential supporters was still more discouraging. Many petitions, some of which emanated from county meetings, and were numerously signed, were presented to that House praying for the insertion ; but not one peer could be found to move for a compliance with the prayer. And finally, she revoked her refusal to accept the annuity offered her, not indeed withdrawing her claim to be prayed for, but resting her renewed entreaty on the ground not of right, but of the King's generosity.

Brandenbough House, 3<sup>th</sup> of March, 1821.

The Queen having been informed through the medium of Lord Liverpool, namely, that Parliament had voted a Provision for the Queen, and that the sum agreed to by the two Houses of Parliament would be ready for the immediate use of the Queen, she find herself under the necessity of accepting it, with a sense of gratitude towards the King, having been proposed by His Majesty himself at the opening of Parliament ; and the Queen is only anxious to show to the King that She wishes to Receive from Him, and not from a mere Party Spirit. The Queen at the same time thinks herself authorised to look upon this measure as the first act of Justice of His Majesty toward's the Queen. She also add that she most entertains the flattering expectation that the same sentiments of Justice which has prevailed in her favour will also effect upon the Heart of the

King, by plaicing her name in the Liturgi as Queen, as such having been the Rights and custum of Her Predecessors. The Queen can never forget what difficulties, and a great deal of troubles She has undergone on that account upon the Continent by having her Name been omitted in the Liturgi, and in consequence She deed not Received the Honour which where due to the Queen, as the Consort to the King of England.

Justice is the basis of happiness for King's, and the good judgment of His Majesty will point it out to him the Methods by which he will accelerate the wish of his People, and the satisfaction of the Queen on this subject, and the Queen has not the least doubt but that the King will, taking into his consideration the Queen's situation, and to act accordinly with that generosity which Characterises a great Mind. Under such circumstances the Queen submit herself intierly to his Majesty's dicesion.

CAROLINE R.

The writer soon learnt that she had nothing to expect from her husband's generosity. The feeling that it was now almost the only stigma which he could inflict upon her made him adhere the more firmly to his resolution, in which, as we have seen from Lord Liverpool's letter to Wilberforce, he was now further upheld by the clear conviction of his minister that the disclosures which had resulted from the recent trial rendered any express mention of her in the services of the Church not only unnecessary but improper. Disappointed in her reliance (if indeed she had really entertained such a hope) on his justice, she conceived the idea that she might extort the wished-for concession from his fears; and the way in which she tried to work on his possible apprehensions of a tumult, and in which she was defeated, will be seen in the subjoined notes and Cabinet minute:

*From the QUEEN to LORD LIVERPOOL.*

Bandenbourgh House, 18th March, 1821.

The Queen communicates to Lord Liverpool that in consequence of not having Received a answer of her last letter which she

wrot on the 3<sup>th</sup> of March, the Queen requests Lord Liverpool to inform His Majesty of the Queen's intentions to present herself next Thursday in Person at the King's Drawing Room, to have the opportunity of Presenting a Petition to his Majesty of obtaining her Rights that the Queen's Name should be restored to the Liturgi as her Predecessorie's.

CAROLINE R.

*Answer from LORD LIVERPOOL to the QUEEN.*

Fife House, 19<sup>th</sup> March, 1821.

Lord Liverpool has the honour to inform the Queen that the letter which he received on the 3<sup>d</sup> inst. was immediately laid before the King; but as His Majesty saw no reason for altering his determination upon the principal question of the Liturgy referred to in it, and as the Queen concluded her letter by saying that "she submitted herself entirely to his Majesty's decision," the King did not consider any answer requisite.

Lord Liverpool is now commanded to state that the King must decline receiving the Queen at his drawing-room; but he will be ready to receive any petition or representation the Queen may be desirous of bringing before him through Lord Liverpool or through the Secretary of State.

Brandenbourg House, 19<sup>th</sup> of March, 1821.

The Queen is much surprised at the contents of Lord Liverpool's letter, and is anxious to know from Lord Liverpool if his Majesty has commanded him to forbid the Queen appearing at his drawing-room, or merely to prevent her Majesty presenting her petition in person to the King.

The restoration of the Queen's name to the Liturgy, being the first and only favour the Queen has ever solicited from his Majesty, she trusts he will be graciously pleased to acquiesce in, and she most earnestly prays his Majesty to grant.

CAROLINE R.

*Minute of Cabinet.*

19<sup>th</sup> of March, 1821.

It is not probable that, after receiving the proposed answer, the Queen should make any attempt to come to Court on Thursday.

It appears to be proper, however, to be prepared for such an event, in case it should occur. The King's confidential servants are unanimously and decidedly of opinion that in such case no attempt should be made to obstruct the Queen on her way to Buckingham House. Such obstruction could not be made without the risk of creating general confusion in the metropolis, and of shedding quantities of blood.

It is proposed therefore that if the Queen should arrive at Buckingham House she should be immediately shown into a room on the ground floor, and that the Lord Chamberlain, Vice-Chamberlain, or some other officer of his Majesty's household, should be sent to her to receive her petition.

If she should decline delivering it into any hands but the King's, the King should not be advised to permit her to come up to the drawing-room, but should himself go down to the room where the Queen is, attended by such of his household and his ministers as may be there, and receive the petition.

It is conceived that there can be no difficulty, by previous arrangements such as those which have been recently adopted, to prevent the Queen from coming up the stairs, without incurring any of the inconveniences which must arise from a conflict in the streets or in the park.

She obeyed the prohibition, sending her petition to Lord Liverpool ; but the King would grant it none but an official negative.

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

*The Petition of Caroline, Queen Consort.*

Brandenbourg House, March 21st, 1821.

Her Majesty seeks to lay before the King this representation of the grievance to which she has been subjected by the continued omission of her name in the Liturgy. The privilege of being prayed for by name in the Church service has been enjoyed by her predecessors Queens Consort of England from the time of the Reformation, and has been ever highly esteemed as a mark of honour and dignity.

Her Majesty has always been impressed with the strongest feelings



of regret that the King should have yielded to any advice by which she should be excluded, and thereby degraded in the estimation both of his Majesty's subjects and of foreign nations. All further proceedings against her Majesty being now finally abandoned, the Queen solicits your Majesty as an act of justice and grace to permit her the enjoyment of that privilege now so long withheld.

The Queen with reluctance makes this her appeal to your Majesty, and earnestly prays that this, her only request, may be granted.

CAROLINE R.

Carlton House, Wednesday, March 21st, 1821.

The King has the pleasure to return to Lord Liverpool the Queen's note and petition, and has no doubt that his lordship will return a proper answer to each.

The King congratulates Lord Liverpool upon the prospect of his being relieved from a disagreeable duty to-morrow.

Little as the Queen deserved respect or approval, it is impossible to avoid sympathising with her perseverance. The coronation, which it had originally been intended to celebrate in the year of the accession, but which had been deferred in consequence of the proceedings before the House of Lords, was now fixed for the 19th of July; and her Majesty being almost unavoidably uninstructed both in the law and precedents relating to that solemnity, imagined that she had an incontestable right to share the honours of the day. She therefore addressed a letter to the King himself, not asking his permission to be crowned with him, but assuming as a matter of course that he intended she should be so:

29th of April.

The Queen, after having been a considerable time of receiving a answer from Lord Liverpool, in consequence of the last conversation that passed between his Lordship and Doctor Lushington:

Her Majesty feels herself under the necessity to establish herself in England, and communicates to Lord Liverpool that the

Queen intends to be present at the Coronation, and requests him to present the inclosed letter to his Majesty.

CAROLINE R.

Brandenbrough House, Sunday, 29<sup>th</sup> of April, 1821.

The Queen from circumstances being obliged to remain in England, she requests the King will be pleased to command those Ladies of the first Rank his Majesty may think the most proper in this Realms, to attend the Queen on the day of the Coronation, of which Her Majesty is informed is now fixed, and also to name such Ladies which will be required to bear Her Majesty's Train on that day.

The Queen being particularly anxious to submit to the good Taste of his Majesty most earnestly entreat the King to informe the Queen in what Dresse the King wishes the Queen to appear in, on that day, at the Coronation.

CAROLINE R.

There may have been a touch of intentional satire on the attention his Majesty was understood to pay to such matters in the solicitation for his directions as to her dress. But, if it was so meant, it missed its mark, since the King refused to receive it, as he explained to Lord Liverpool in that letter which, among the following correspondence, came from himself, and which is sufficiently characteristic both of his unchangeableness of purpose in all matters which affected himself, and of the accuracy of his views, and the clearness of expression which he had at his command ; since it must be confessed that Lord Liverpool's proposal to leave the Queen's notification of her intentions unanswered would have been capable of being construed into a tacit acquiescence in it.

Fife House, 30<sup>th</sup> April, 1821.

Lord Liverpool has the honour to send your Majesty a letter addressed to your Majesty by the Queen, and likewise a copy of a letter from the Queen to Lord Liverpool.

The communication from Dr. Lushington to which the Queen refers took place somewhat more than a fortnight since. The

doctor complained that all the sums advanced to the Queen since her return to England had been deducted from the annuity, and urged the justice of some further advance being made to her, to enable her to meet the charges of the purchase of Cambridge House, and the outfit for her establishment.

Lord Liverpool answered that if the sums advanced had been charged against the Queen, her annuity had been made retrospective from the late King's demise; that these charges are all specified in the Act, and if they were thought unreasonable the objection should have been made in the committee on the bill, and the sense of Parliament might at the time have been fairly taken upon it; that there existed no fund out of which any further advance could be made by the Crown or by Government, and that it was wholly out of the question to make any further application to Parliament on the subject.

Lord Liverpool humbly submits that the threat respecting the Coronation is wholly undeserving of notice or attention.

*Most private.*

Brighton, May 1st, 1821.

The King has just received the box from Lord Liverpool containing the copy of a letter from the Queen to Lord Liverpool, and Lord Liverpool's account of a conversation which took place a short time since between Lord Liverpool and Dr. Lushington, referred to in the Queen's letter to Lord Liverpool, and a letter from the Queen addressed to the King.

The King highly approves of the line and of the tone taken by Lord Liverpool in his conversation with Dr. Lushington. The King, however, entertains considerable doubts whether some decided notice should not be taken of the "threat" (as Lord Liverpool justly terms it) held out by the Queen in her letter to Lord Liverpool, "of her intention of being present at the coronation." Had such an intimation reached Lord Liverpool merely in the shape of an idle report or of a fabrication, such as almost every day produces, the King would then entirely concur with Lord Liverpool's opinion that it would not justify any direct notice being taken of it.

The matter here, however, stands widely different, as the Queen has decidedly and pointedly specified to Lord Liverpool "that it is her intention to obtrude herself at the King's coronation."

If, therefore, the subject were suffered to pass over in *utter silence* after this express and positive declaration on the part of the Queen, officially communicated by her under her own hand to Lord Liverpool as the King's first minister, the Queen, on the one hand, might have some sort of colour to assume that it had never been formally notified to her, as it is now the King's intention that it shall be, that she should *never* be suffered by the King, under any circumstances, to appear at that most solemn ceremony, the law having placed the entire control upon that head in the hands and at the pleasure of the King; while, on the other hand, she might attribute such silence to an unworthy timidity on the part of the King and of his Government, as well as invidiously pretend that her intimation upon this point had not only not been treated with common civility, but had been contemptuously disregarded.

Lord Liverpool will observe that the King returns *unopened* the letter addressed by the Queen to the King. This is only in conformity to a resolution adopted more than twenty years ago, and since invariably adhered to by the King (but which must have escaped Lord Liverpool's recollection) that the King would *never again* receive or open any letter or paper addressed to him personally by the Queen.

The King will only further suggest to Lord Liverpool the propriety of postponing any reply or communication whatsoever upon this subject to the Queen until after the Court at Buckingham House on Thursday next. From what so recently occurred with respect to the last drawing-room, the King thinks that Lord Liverpool will clearly perceive the wisdom of this precaution.

Fife House, May 4th, 1821.

Lord Liverpool has the honour to inform the Queen that, as it has been his Majesty's invariable determination for some years to receive no communication from the Queen except through his Government, the King directed Lord Liverpool to open the Queen's letter; and, Lord Liverpool having laid the substance of it before his Majesty, the King has commanded Lord Liverpool to say in answer that it is his Majesty's prerogative to regulate the ceremonial of his coronation in such manner as



he may think fit; that the Queen can form no part of that ceremonial, except in consequence of a distinct authority from the King, and that it is not his Majesty's intention under the present circumstances to give any such authority.

Lord Liverpool thinks it must be unnecessary, in consequence of this communication, to notice the other points in the Queen's letter, but he will further add that the King has dispensed with the attendance of all ladies upon his coronation.

Brandenbrough House, Saturday, 5th of May.

The Queen is much surprised at Lord Liverpool's answer, and assures the Earl that her Majesty is determined to attend at the coronation; the Queen considering it as one of her rights and privileges, which her Majesty is resolved ever to maintain. The Queen requests Lord Liverpool to communicate the above to his Majesty.

CAROLINE R.

Fife House, May 5th, 1821.

Lord Liverpool has the honour to send your Majesty the answer which he has received from the Queen. Lord Liverpool humbly submits that the correspondence would better end here, at least for the present. The threat is an empty threat, which the Queen has evidently not the power of carrying into execution, and must appear to have been made solely with a view to extorting money.

Lord Liverpool will request your Majesty to be pleased to return the Queen's letter. Lord Liverpool has directed a copy to be prepared for your Majesty of the whole correspondence.

Fife House, 7th May, 1821.

Lord Liverpool has received the King's commands, in consequence of the last communication of the Queen to Lord Liverpool of the 5th inst., to inform the Queen that his Majesty having determined that the Queen shall form no part of the ceremonial of his coronation, it is therefore the Royal pleasure that the Queen shall not attend the said ceremony.

The Queen, however, pressed her demand with such pertinacity that it was at last referred to the Privy Council;



and, probably to the surprise of many, after it had been argued with the utmost elaborateness of antiquarian research by the same counsel who had conducted the trial on either side, it was proved that, so far from either law or custom establishing her Majesty's claim, the great majority of precedents was adverse to it. In nearly 800 years which had elapsed since the Conquest there had been but eight instances, including that of William and Mary, which was obviously not in point, in which the king and queen had been crowned together. In the other cases about an equal number of queens had been crowned after their husbands, and several had never been crowned at all. But when this point too had consequently been decided against her, she appealed to the second precedent, and begged to be crowned the week after the King. Once more Lord Liverpool was compelled to reply that the King would not consent to her being crowned at all ; and this was the last communication which took place between him and the ill-fated Princess. She had previously given him notice that she should, on the morning of the ceremony, demand admission to the Abbey, and had been informed that the King had issued orders that entrance should be denied her ; and when, to carry out her announcement, she presented herself at the Abbey doors and was refused admission by the doorkeeper, the indignity, coupled with the absence of the sympathy on which she had reckoned, threw her into a state of agitation which culminated in a fever, of which in the first week of August she died. Even on her deathbed she could not wholly forget her sufferings, but desired that her remains might be carried to her native Brunswick for burial, and that her coffin might bear an inscription that she was "the injured Queen of England." The latter direction she could hardly expect to be complied with, but her wish on the former point was willingly listened to, and indeed it relieved the ministers from some difficulty, since the King would probably not have allowed her a place in the royal vault of Windsor, and to bury her at Westminster would

have been almost to invite tumult. Even the procession of the funeral through London did not pass off without serious riots, through the misconduct of some leaders of the mob, who blocked up the streets by which it had been intended that it should proceed, in order to compel the adoption of a line through the City. However, after they had succeeded in this object no further tumult delayed its progress to Harwich, and at that port the remains of the unhappy and misguided but certainly ill-treated Queen were embarked to find their last repose in their native land.

Could she have been conscious how full a recognition of her rank awaited her, she might have been more comforted in her death. Not only did the Kings-at-arms with escorts of the Royal Guards attend her body as long as it remained in England; but the King, who was paying a State visit to Ireland, put on the deepest mourning; and a Court mourning was ordered with as due a regard to the etiquette of courts as if there had been no cloud on her reputation, no circumstance of discomfort in her married life. Lord Liverpool had been anxious that the mourning should be general, and urgently recommended the immediate issue of such an order in the letter which he wrote to the King himself with the news of the Queen's death; assuring him that such an order "was universally expected," and pointing out to him that it "would gracefully terminate the whole of this unhappy business." But Lord Londonderry,<sup>1</sup> who was the minister in attendance on his Majesty, replied that "his Majesty concurred with Lord Liverpool that the order for the Court going into mourning for the Queen should be issued from the Lord Chamberlain's office with the least practicable delay; but thought it should be for as short a time as was consistent with decorum (three weeks had occurred to his Majesty as a suitable term). He was also of opinion that the Earl Marshal should not give any orders for a general mourning, as he felt an objection to render

<sup>1</sup> In April of this year, Lord Castlereagh had succeeded his father in the marquisate.

the mourning otherwise than *voluntary*, under all the circumstances of the case, and especially after declining to have her Majesty specially prayed for in the service of the Church." Lord Liverpool thought it his duty to combat the King's objections, though well aware that he could only do so at the risk of exciting the King's serious displeasure.

*Private.*

Coombe Wood, August 12th, 1821.

MY DEAR LONDONDERRY,

I have this moment read your letters of Friday.

I must just say, in justification of myself, that I had given directions for the Queen's body being embarked in the river, but the Admiralty made so strong a representation of the difficulties and eventual delay which might take place before the frigate could leave the British shore, that at a small cabinet, at which the Lord Chancellor, Lord Westmoreland, Lord Melville, and myself attended, and to which Sir George Cockburn was called, we felt ourselves obliged to agree that the embarkation should take place at Harwich.

It has been so arranged that the funeral will not pass through the town, but go round by the New Road. I regret very much the objections of the King to the Order from the Lord Marshal's office, as this Order is made, not only in the cases of the demise of the king or queen, but in those of brothers and royal progeny.

Whether the funeral is public or private, I think the reason suggested (the omission of the Queen's name in the Liturgy) would be still more unfortunate, considering all the circumstances under which that omission took place, and I cannot but wish that you and Lord Sidmouth would bring this matter again under the King's consideration.

The two Orders for mourning have not always appeared in the same *Gazette*, and it would answer every purpose if the Lord Marshal's was in the *Gazette* of Saturday next. The omission in that of Tuesday, if it did occur, might naturally be ascribed to accident and the King's absence.

With respect to the duration of the mourning, it is not usual to fix it in the first Order, but I think three weeks decidedly too short a time. I should recommend the usual short period,

particularly at this season of the year, when no comparative inconvenience arises from mourning; but, at all events, I think six weeks the shortest time that could decently be fixed.

In considering all these questions, the object ought to be to do all that is right, and nothing that would offend decent and serious people.

As long as the Queen lived it might not unreasonably have been apprehended that every concession would be followed by some fresh demand; now all her demands are at an end, and the only consideration should be how we can close the business most quietly and without offence.

I will communicate with the Lord Chancellor on the other points in the Queen's will; but, as the executors must attend the funeral, nothing can, I conceive, be done upon them till they return.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

This letter, however, produced no change in the royal determination; nor, if any discontent or disapproval was felt, did the expression of such a feeling find utterance. All parties were glad to bury a subject in silence, the dealing with which was fraught with no pleasant recollections to any one.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

The King's visit to Ireland—The disfranchisement of Grampound—Lord Liverpool's maxims on the transference of the members—Proposes different polling places—Lord Liverpool tries to procure Canning's return to the Cabinet—The King refuses to admit him—Death of Lady Liverpool—Lord Liverpool refuses a Canonry of Windsor to a nominee of the King—Canning is appointed Governor-General of India—Mr. Peel succeeds Lord Falmouth at the Home Office—The Grenville family joins the Ministry—Mr. Plunkett is made Attorney-General for Ireland—Distress in the agricultural districts—Contemplative relaxation of the Corn Law.

IN matters of general policy the year 1821 passed off quietly. In the debate on the Address, Lord Liverpool could venture to affirm that "it was certain that the thinking part of the country approved of the system on which the Government was conducted, and would consider any departure from it as leading to inevitable ruin." And the uniform support which throughout the session they received from both Houses of Parliament amply bore out his boast. One subject, the disfranchisement of the Cornish borough of Grampound, which had long been notorious for corruption, and the transfer of the two seats to the county of York, is memorable as having afforded the first opening for the revival, in a practical shape, of the question of Parliamentary reform, which had had such powerful advocates, even in the Cabinet itself, before the outbreak of the French Revolution. At first the new reformers adhered in general to the outlines of the measure which Pitt had proposed in 1785; and



especially it may be remarked that, in every discussion which took place on the subject, all parties seemed to agree, as to a political axiom, that the existing number of members for the House of Commons was unalterable. It never occurred to any one that the disfranchisement of one place must not inevitably involve the enfranchisement of another; but it seemed to be accepted as the ruling principle that the entire nation had a right to a certain number of representatives, which could suffer no diminution without injury to the kingdom at large. The only question in dispute was whether the right of representation should be transferred to another town, which should be raised to the rank of a parliamentary borough, or to some county which, from its general importance in wealth, extent, or population, might be considered to be entitled to a more powerful voice in the councils of the nation. There were at least plausible grounds for the former course, since many of the greatest centres of our manufacturing industry, Leeds, Manchester, Birmingham, and others, having grown up at a period long subsequent to the establishment of our parliamentary system, returned no members, and were only so far represented as being portions of counties.<sup>1</sup> And many representations were made

<sup>1</sup> The following list of the chief unrepresented towns, which was laid before Lord Liverpool by one of those who advocated their claims, seems worth preserving, both as a curious record of their names, and as a proof of the prodigious growth of the population of the manufacturing districts in a period of less than half a century :

Population.		Population.	
Manchester . .	112,000	Stockport . .	20,000
Birmingham .	97,000	Perth . . . .	18,000
Leeds . . . .	54,000	Greenwich . .	18,000
Sheffield . . .	52,000	Blackburn . .	17,000
Bolton . . . .	26,000	Brighton . . .	16,000
Leith . . . . .	22,000	Wolverhampton	16,000
Paisley . . . .	21,000	Macclesfield .	15,000
Preston . . . .	20,000	Dudley . . . .	15,000
Deptford . . .	20,000	Woolwich . . .	14,000

to Lord Liverpool to procure for one of them the seats thus placed at his disposal (since about the disfranchisement of Grampound there was no dispute); for, we may also remark, no one as yet conceived the notion of any place returning but a single member, though one of the memorials laid before the minister did so far foreshadow the course adopted ten years later as to recommend the division of a county into two electoral districts, as a plan preferable to that of allowing any one constituency to return four members. It was urged in the same paper that to enfranchise one of the larger towns would be a far lighter violence to the general principles of representation, and would be opening the door in a far less degree to future innovations, than to increase the number of representatives of any county on the ground of its superior extent, or the greater amount of its population. And if the minister's decision should be in favour of the towns, the cases of Manchester and Leeds were particularly pressed as entitled to a preference because, as they had formerly been represented, their enfranchisement would be only a restoration of a privilege of which they had been deprived, no one seemed to know for what reason. If there was only an opportunity of repairing the injury to one of them now, there could be little doubt that other cases of proved corruption would soon afford an opportunity of letting in the other, with Birmingham, Sheffield, and other places at present labouring under similar deprivation, in their turn. Lord

	Population.		Population.
Chatham . .	13,000	Inverness . .	12,000
Sunderland . .	12,000	Falkirk . . .	10,000
Rochdale . .	12,000	Kilmarnock .	10,000
Warrington . .	12,000	Huddersfield .	10,000
Wigan . . .	12,000	Bilston . . .	10,000
Camberwell . .	12,000	Frome . . .	10,000
Greenock . .	12,000	Whitehaven .	10,000

And besides these, the claims of Halifax with 9,800, and Kidderminster with 9,000, were strenuously pressed, as coming very close to the limit of population, and being each the seat of an important industry.

Liverpool of course, as we shall see, spoke more than once on the question in recommendation of the course on which he decided ; but, as an introduction to his parliamentary arguments, it may be well, especially as the question of parliamentary reform is not yet exhausted, to produce a memorandum which he drew up on the question as an answer to the memorial from which the suggestions enumerated above have been extracted, and which he also laid before the Cabinet as a brief abstract of the reasons which had operated most forcibly on his own mind.

*Memorandum by Lord Liverpool.*

I cannot agree in opinion with the writer of the enclosed memorandum.

I assume what remains to be proved, that the borough of Gram-pound is so corrupt as to require to be disfranchised.

I assume likewise that, under the special circumstances of Cornwall, it is not advisable to throw the borough into the hundred, as has been done in all other cases, but that the right of election is to be transferred to some place or district.

I should then say that the giving the right of election to the populous manufacturing towns was the worst remedy which could be applied.

In the first place, it would be the greatest evil conferred on those towns ; it would subject the population to a perpetual factious canvass, which would divert, more or less, the people from their industrious habits, and keep alive a permanent spirit of turbulence and disaffection amongst them.

Against such a measure all the most respectable inhabitants of those towns would, I am convinced, protest.

If reference is made to the discussions on Parliamentary Reform at the time when Mr. Pitt brought forward his plan, it will be found that, with all the attempt that was made to obtain petitions from different parts of the country, the towns of Manchester and Birmingham could never be induced to petition for this advantage ; and I have had, many years ago, conversations with the late Mr. Bolton and Mr. Garbett (the friend of the late Lord Lansdowne, and the most important person in Bir-

mingham) on this matter, and though neither of them were adverse to Parliamentary Reform, they were decidedly adverse to Birmingham returning members to Parliament.

In the next place, I think the proposed transfer would be the one the most injurious to the Constitution that could be devised.

I do not wish to see more such boroughs as Westminster, Southwark, Nottingham, &c. I believe them to be more corrupt than any other places when seriously contested; and I believe the description of persons which find their way into Parliament through these places are generally those who, from the peculiarity of their character or their station, are the least likely to be steadily attached to the good order of society.

I see all the difficulties of deviating from the old course of throwing the borough into the hundred. By this species of remedy we did not propose to reform Parliament, but to reform the particular borough. The moment we depart from it we launch into the sea of speculation. If I am driven, however, to the alternative, I should prefer transferring the members to the larger counties. County elections are the least corrupt of any in the kingdom.

The representatives of them, if not generally the ablest members in the House, are certainly those who have the greatest stake in the country, and may be trusted for the most part in periods of difficulty and danger.

If you destroy something corrupt, the natural course seems to be to substitute something sound and safe in the place of it, and not to prefer adding to the number of those which, taken in themselves, I must consider as the great evils of our present system; though I am aware that, in the limited extent in which they now exist, some advantages may be derived from them as part of a mixed and comprehensive representation.

I do not see why the project of large towns limits itself more than that of large counties. The amount of population in the towns to which you would give representatives must be arbitrary. Why should you not therefore take either the population or extent of the counties?

If, for example, you were to take those counties which had more than 200,000 inhabitants, this would be as good a limitation as any you could apply respecting the great towns.



If, however, any project of borough reform could be devised, I should certainly prefer it to any addition to the county members.

It would have many advantages, and this particular, that it would leave the frame and system of Parliament unaltered.

I should like, if it were possible, to make no alteration in the proportions of either county members, members for popular places, or members for boroughs, but to substitute, where abuse was proved, a pure and well-constituted borough for a corrupt one.

The bill for the disfranchisement of the offending borough was not a ministerial measure, but came from the Whig party, being introduced by a brother of the Duke of Bedford, Lord John Russell, at that time member for Huntingdonshire. And, in the form in which it passed the Commons, it conferred the franchise on Leeds; but, when it came to the Upper House, Lord Liverpool, acting in accordance with the views which he had expressed in the paper just quoted, moved the substitution of the county of Yorkshire for its great manufacturing town. At the same time he took care to place on record his general views on the subject, and, while he affirmed in the broadest manner that "where systematic corruption was proved against a borough punishment ought to follow," he guarded himself against being understood to favour the disfranchisement of any place on grounds of expediency alone.

"He proceeded," he said, "on no theoretical view. The true rule of conduct in questions of this kind was never to reform on speculation, but, when any part of the elective system was found corrupt, then to take means to correct it. When an evil was clearly proved to exist, nothing could be worse than to shut the door against a remedy. He supported the present bill, not because he was a parliamentary reformer, but because he was an enemy to all plans of general reform." And these sentiments were quite in harmony with the general feeling of Parliament, for even in the House of Commons more than



one member had expressly protested against his acquiescence in the present bill being construed into "a pledge of his future support of what was called parliamentary reform." Another improvement adopted at a later day he himself suggested as one to which he saw no objection. When, on Lord Harrowby complaining of "the great inconvenience that would arise in taking the poll at once for so large a county as Yorkshire," he replied that he should not object to a proposition for allowing "polls to be taken in different parts of the county ; but that could only be done by a separate measure." Apparently it was not thought worth while to introduce a new bill for so limited an object, but the suggestion proves Lord Liverpool's keen appreciation of, and willingness to remedy, a practical inconvenience. The principle of making no alteration in our system of government "on speculation," or to meet the fancied requirements of a theory, has been discarded since his time. But, though it is unsuited to the present feverish zeal for innovation, it is far from impossible that a future generation may acknowledge the wisdom which dictated it. The first Napoleon, no unskilful judge of men and of the causes of events, pronounced that it was to Necker, and the rest of those whom he called ideologists, who wished to frame the Constitution of the country according to ideal notions of symmetry and perfection, instead of by a reference to the natures and habits of men, that the miseries which fell on France at the end of the last century were solely owing.<sup>1</sup> It is at all events certain that, since perfection is,

<sup>1</sup> De Bourrienne, who (*Mémoires*, viii. 106) reports a conversation between the Emperor and the young M. de Stael, Necker's grandson, represents him as saying : "Votre grandpère était un idéologue, un fou, un vieux maniaque. A soixante ans vouloir faire des plans de constitution. Les états seraient, ma foi, bien gouvernées avec des hommes à systèmes, des faiseurs de théories, qui jugent les hommes dans les livres et le monde sur la carte ! . . . Des économistes ! ce sont des songe-creux qui rêvent des plans de finances et ne sauraient pas remplir les fonctions de précepteur dans le dernier village de mon

and always must be, unattainable, the first abandonment of the practical guidance of past experience for Utopian theories on abstract rights, and on the natural good sense, equity, and virtue of mankind, is an abandonment also of all tranquillity and stability, and an opening the door to a course of innovation which is so far from having any visible end that every fresh change is but a plea for some further alteration.

Lord Liverpool was not, however, rendered so presumptuous by the general success of the Government throughout the Session, as not to desire to obtain additional strength whenever he could do so. One reinforcement of great importance was naturally suggested to him by the termination of all discussions relating to the Queen. Since Canning had quitted the Cabinet solely because, if he continued a minister, his speech and his silence would have been fraught with equal embarrassment to himself and his colleagues, it seemed reasonable to hope that the removal of that difficulty might be thought to have

empire. L'ouvrage de votre grandpère est l'œuvre d'un vieil entêté qui est mort en rabâchant sur le gouvernement des états. . . . Oui j'étais nécessaire, indispensable pour réparer toutes les sottises de votre grandpère, pour effacer le mal qu'il a fait à la France. C'est lui qui a renversé la monarchie, et conduit Louis XVI. à l'échafaud. . . . Oui, je vous le dis, Robespierre lui-même, Marat, Danton, ont fait moins de mal à la France que M. Necker. C'est lui qui a fait la révolution. . . . Vos faiseurs de plans tracent des utopies sur le papier, des imbecilles lisent leur rêveries, on les colporte, on y croit, le bonheur général est dans toutes les bouches ; et bientôt après le peuple n'a pas de pain. Il se revolte, et voilà le fruit ordinaire de toutes ces belles théories ! C'est votre grandpère qui est cause des Saturnales qui ont desolé la France ; tout le sang versé dans la révolution doit retomber sur lui." The veteran Marquis de Bouillé supplies us with the principles (if they deserve the name) of Necker's policy from his own mouth. "Je lui dis qu'il armait le peuple contre les premiers ordres de l'état. . . . J'entraî dans les détails. Il me répondit froidement, en levant les yeux au ciel, qu'il fallait bien compter sur les vertus morales des hommes !" (*Mémoires de M. Bouillé*, 70.) Madame de Staël, too, gives a similar account : "Se fiant trop, il faut avouer, à l'empire de la raison." (*Considérations sur la Rév. Fr.* i. 171.)

also removed the reasons for his absence from office. And, holding that opinion, at the beginning of June Lord Liverpool first mentioned the advantage which he anticipated from Canning's return to the ministry, in conversation to the King, and afterwards brought the arrangement by which he hoped to procure his aid more formally under his Majesty's notice in the following letter :

Fife House, 10th June, 1821.

In obedience to your Majesty's commands, Lord Liverpool has the honour of submitting to your Majesty the arrangements which he conceives will be most advantageous to your Majesty's service, in consequence of Lord Sidmouth's intimation of his desire to retire from the office of Secretary of State for the Home Department, and of the vacancy which exists in the situation of President of the Board of Control.<sup>1</sup> Lord Liverpool has ascertained that there can be no difficulty in conferring upon Lord Sidmouth a pension of 3,000*l.* a year, conformably to the Act which passed three years ago.

If your Majesty should be desirous that Lord Sidmouth should continue a part of your Government, and his Lordship should not object to remain in the Cabinet, without office, an arrangement to this effect would, under all the circumstances, be most satisfactory to Lord Liverpool, and not less so, as Lord Liverpool believes, to the rest of your Majesty's confidential servants.

In filling up the vacant offices, it is much to be desired that such a course should be adopted as would connect with the Government those individuals and interests which form at present no part of it, but between which and the Government there exists a general coincidence of opinion on the great principles of domestic and foreign policy.

Such an arrangement, to be complete, would include Mr. Canning, Mr. Peel, and Mr. C. Williams Wynne as the representative of the Grenville connexion in the House of Commons.

<sup>1</sup> Since Mr. Canning's resignation that office had been held by Mr. Bathurst (avowedly as a temporary measure) in conjunction with the Chancellorship of the Duchy.

Lord Liverpool must observe, however, that there are but two offices vacant to give effect to such an arrangement, and Lord Liverpool must humbly submit it as his opinion, that in the disposal of these offices regard should be had to all the considerations of talents, standing in political life, and former connexion with the existing Government.

In this view Lord Liverpool submits that the first offer must be made to Mr. Canning. To postpone his pretensions to those of the others, after the situations which he has already filled, would be manifestly to decide against him; but it can never be felt as an act of degradation, either by Mr. Peel or Mr. Wynne, who have never been Cabinet ministers, that a person of Mr. Canning's talents, who has already filled two Cabinet offices, should have the offer in the first instance of a higher office in the State than can at this moment be proposed to the others.

Your Majesty has been apprized of a confidential communication which Lord Liverpool thought it advisable to have with Mr. Peel.

Mr. Peel assured Lord Liverpool that he was strongly attached to your Majesty's present Government, and that he was chiefly actuated in declining what it had been intimated might be proposed to him, by personal considerations, in which his health bore the principal part.

Lord Liverpool cannot feel that Mr. Peel's consequence could have been in any degree impaired by accepting an office held for so many years by the late Lord Melville; held by Lord Castlereagh after he had been Secretary in Ireland, and the chief instrument in carrying the union through the Irish Parliament; and held by Lord Harrowby and Mr. Canning after they had been previously Secretaries of State.

As, however, Mr. Peel thought fit to decline it, Lord Liverpool submits, according to the proposed plan, to offer it to Mr. Charles Wynne, with a seat in the Cabinet; and Lord Liverpool can hardly doubt that this offer, combined with other circumstances, will have the effect of connecting with your Majesty's service a most important and powerful family and interest.

Lord Liverpool has only further to add with respect to Mr. Canning, that many considerations may render it most expedient that Lord Melville should be requested to take the office of

Secretary of State for the Home Department, for which he appears to be eminently qualified ; and that Mr. Canning might then succeed Lord Melville at the Admiralty.

We see from the above letter that Canning was not the only coadjutor whom the Prime Minister desired to obtain. The King, however, had conceived a deep resentment against Canning for his recent conduct, and had even, as he afterwards declared, made such a vow never again to admit him into his service, that, "as a gentleman" he could not break it. He therefore replied to Lord Liverpool by an intimation of his unwillingness "to make any change in the present frame of his Government ;" and though Lord Liverpool replied with a fresh importunity, urging on his Majesty that "the principle of the proposed arrangement appeared to him to be essential in the present state of the country, and of the Government, for the benefit of his Majesty's service, and entreating therefore, that he would condescend to give it a more full consideration," he was prevented from pressing it on his royal master with the pertinacity which he would otherwise have employed, and which, as we may infer from subsequent events in the next year, would have proved successful, by his private distresses. The very day after he had despatched his second note on the subject, he lost his wife, with whom he had lived in uninterrupted happiness for above a quarter of a century, and than whom no minister has ever had a partner more proud of his talents or of his triumphs, or more eager to aid him in his labours. No small portion of the letters which have been quoted in these pages are copied out by herself ; and her death, which had only very recently been seen to be imminent, quite disabled her husband for the time. His feelings on the whole question are fully expressed in a letter to Mr. Arbuthnot. That gentleman, who had for some time been one of the Secretaries of the Treasury, stood high in the confidence of several of



the ministers, and had been trusted by them to embody their common opinions in one communication, in order to save Lord Liverpool trouble at so painful a moment. The most important part, however, of the memorandum which, in accordance with their instructions, he drew up for him, related to a conversation which George IV. had held with Lord Sidmouth, in which, far from speaking of his vow, the King had alleged that "he did not mean to proscribe Mr. Canning altogether, nor to express his determination to exclude him for ever from the Cabinet; that he only begged not to have Mr. Canning pressed upon him at present, not being prepared, on the sudden, to give him that full confidence which a Cabinet minister had a right to expect: that he had nothing like enmity to Mr. Canning; that, on the contrary, if Mr. Canning should attend the levée, he would receive him with the greatest civility; and that, if Mr. Canning had other objects, he would gladly promote them." The ministers in general were inclined to temporize; to persuade Lord Sidmouth to delay his resignation, so that it might be "open to Lord Liverpool to try the King again, before the meeting of the next session, on the subject of Mr. Canning." Lord Liverpool, as we shall see by his reply to Arbuthnot's memorandum, was more inclined to press the question at once: on principle as well as from policy, as he told his correspondent, he always preferred a straightforward course; but, when he found that the King was prepared to allege as a reason for adhering to his decision his desire to be accompanied by Lord Sidmouth as his confidential minister on his intended visit to Ireland, he felt that it was impossible to take a step which might be represented as an undue interference with his Majesty's personal comfort, and therefore in a second letter to the King he waived his request for the moment, reserving at the same time his right to renew it before the day when Canning's oratorical genius would have opportunities to display itself.

*Secret and confidential.*

Fife House, June 15th, 1821.

MY DEAR ARBUTHNOT,

In the present state of my mind, it is most distressing to me to be perplexed on such a subject as that on which I have heard from you this day, but I will fairly confess to you that I feel I have neither strength nor health to engage in a protracted discussion on the subject to which your letter alludes.

Before the severe calamity<sup>1</sup> which has befallen me had occurred, I had calmly deliberated on what it was fitting in me to do. I was in a better state for such deliberation at that time than I am now; my mind was then made up as to the result: I thought those with whom I had communicated had concurred in my views, but in this I must have been mistaken.

It is idle to say that the question respecting Canning is not one of proscription. What king, or what individual, can ever say that he proscribes another for ever? Excluding a man at the time his services are wanted, and when there is an opening for him, is to all intents and purposes proscription, and upon such a principle, so applied, I cannot agree to remain at the head of the Government.

Recollect, the question is not, whether Canning should be forced into an office of constant personal intercourse with the Sovereign; such a step I would never press; but the office which I have proposed is one of those in the whole Government in which there is the least necessity for any personal communication between the Sovereign and the individual who holds it.

The considerations I have already stated are sufficient, but you must know as well as I do what has been passing behind the scenes. The objection to Canning, if it really exists, is one of personal pique and resentment.

These qualities, unfortunately existing where they do exist, have been the source of all our past errors and calamities. I doubt, however, whether on the present occasion they would have led to what appears now to be the determination, if there had not been a secret scheme, not to destroy the Government at present, but to have the means of destroying it whenever the oppor-

<sup>1</sup> Lady Liverpool had died in the preceding week.

tunity may be more convenient. I look upon the principle of the present arrangement as the test, whether we are, or are not, the Government.

The sense of our proposal to the King is, Make your Government as strong as you can by the infusion of all the talents, combined with good principles, that you can obtain.

The King's answer has been advised on this principle: Do not strengthen your Government if possible, for by this means you may put it out of your power to change them; keep them as they are, and you will then be enabled to preserve them, or to take the Opposition, as may be most compatible with your new connexion.

I will be obliged to you to show this letter to Lord Londonderry, Lord Sidmouth, the Duke of Wellington, and Lord Bathurst.

I have been long enough in life to know the advantage of a straight course on the one hand, and all the inconveniences which arise out of contrivances on the other. My mind upon this whole matter is unalterably fixed. I have no right, nor desire, to dictate to others.

It is not affectation in me to say that I am ill in body, as well as in mind.

Till my return from Gloucestershire, I should wish as much as possible to be spared all further discussion upon this subject. I will add moreover, that I should wish to be spared it then; for the question must turn upon the King's determination in consequence of my last letter. If he adheres to his present resolution, he must look out for another minister.

I do not know whether any of my colleagues, except Lord Londonderry, have seen my late correspondence with the King. I enclose copies which you may show them, but I will be obliged to you to return them to me.

I am, my dear Arbuthnot,

Very sincerely yours,

LIVERPOOL.

*To the King.*

Fife House, June 29th, 1821.

Lord Liverpool feels it to be his duty, in the first place, to lay before your Majesty the copy of a letter which he has received from Mr. Canning; but having done so, it is necessary for him

to state, that it can make no alteration as to the advice he must humbly submit to your Majesty on the present occasion ; for, however honorable this letter may be to Mr. Canning, and however Lord Liverpool may be disposed to admit, that those offices which are immediately connected with your Majesty's personal service may be properly, with some qualifications, bestowed on personal considerations, it has appeared to him always undeniable that the confidential and responsible servants of the Crown should be selected on public grounds, and that personal considerations should as little as may be practicable interfere with such appointments.

In submitting the name of Mr. Canning as one of your Majesty's confidential servants, Lord Liverpool had regard to every public consideration connected with such a choice. That in the present state of this country and of Parliament, Mr. Canning's talents and services were of material importance to your Majesty's Government. That there exists as complete a coincidence of opinion between Mr. Canning and your Majesty's servants upon all political measures, domestic and foreign, as between any two of your Majesty's present servants.

That there can be no reason to question, therefore, the loyalty or soundness of Mr. Canning's political principles ; and that though, on this occasion, it may be a matter of subordinate importance, it is nevertheless true that Mr. Canning, whilst in England, has given a more steady support to your Majesty's Government in the House of Commons in the present session than any of the public men not connected with that Government.

If there are any circumstances in Mr. Canning's conduct which your Majesty may think requires explanation, it may be a good ground for asking such explanation ; but, Lord Liverpool humbly submits, cannot properly be a ground for excluding Mr. Canning, before an opportunity has been afforded of giving the explanation required.

Lord Liverpool entreats your Majesty to consider this whole matter as bearing upon the real dignity of the Crown. Lord Liverpool will venture to assert, that the principle of exclusion has rarely been attempted without having had the effect of lowering the Crown and exalting the individual proscribed.



When his late Majesty objected to Mr. Fox as one of his confidential servants, in 1804, it appeared to many that he had strong public grounds for so doing, more particularly as Mr. Fox had been struck out of the Privy Council by the advice of those who were then desirous of bringing him into his Majesty's service. It is nevertheless notorious that Mr. Fox acquired importance and reputation by the very act of exclusion; and Lord Liverpool may be allowed to speak feelingly upon this subject, as he was the person in the year 1806 who advised his late Majesty to waive his exclusion of Mr. Fox, and his late Majesty was most graciously pleased to acquiesce in that advice.

Lord Liverpool understands, from some of his colleagues, that since his unavoidable absence from town and attention to all public business, your Majesty has been pleased to disclaim, in strong terms, the idea of permanently excluding Mr. Canning from your Government.

That your Majesty's difficulties were therefore to be considered as temporary, and that you particularly wished to have the attendance of Lord Sidmouth upon your Majesty as Secretary of State on your royal visit to Ireland. If this representation of your Majesty's sentiments and feelings be correct, Lord Liverpool will certainly not press upon your Majesty the arrangement respecting the offices of Secretary of State for the Home Department, and of First Lord of the Admiralty, at the present moment. Lord Liverpool must, however, humbly submit to your Majesty that in such case every other part of the proposed arrangement should likewise be suspended. The Government will then remain for the present exactly as it is; but Lord Liverpool cannot conceal from your Majesty, that after all that has passed, this suspension must be attended with serious inconvenience.

Lord Liverpool must, at the same time, most humbly request your Majesty's permission to have it distinctly understood, that he is to be at full liberty to bring the arrangement now before your Majesty again under your Majesty's consideration previous to the next session of Parliament, if it shall appear to him then to be advisable.



The latter of these letters is of itself a refutation of those who would sneer at Lord Liverpool as a timid statesman, or one who would postpone what he believed the interests of the State required, even to pacify the imperiousness or humour the susceptibilities of his royal master. On the contrary, no language can be plainer than that in which he asserts the impropriety of allowing personal considerations to prevent the selection of the most capable persons for the service of the country ; and his own right to a paramount voice in arrangements for which he alone was and would be held to be responsible. Yet so little was the King disposed to yield, and so complicated are the interests which a prudent minister, under a parliamentary system such as ours, is compelled to consult, that, as will be seen, some months elapsed before Lord Liverpool was able to effect any of the changes which he desired ; and even then he was forced to postpone that portion of them which he most desired, and which was ultimately only effected at the very moment when it seemed more impracticable than ever, in consequence of a great and unexpected calamity.

Mr. Canning's case was not the only one on which at this period Lord Liverpool differed from the King ; to a conscientious minister, the making an unbecoming appointment is a far more inexcusable breach of duty than the postponement of one which is desirable. And in the other instance to which we are alluding, the obligation to adhere to his own judgment seemed to Lord Liverpool the more imperative, since it related to Church preferment. Nevertheless, the cases are probably so rare in which a Prime Minister has ventured positively to refuse sanctioning a nomination which the King has not only requested as a personal favour, but has even announced to the individual whose promotion was intended, that the subjoined letters, closing a long correspondence, seem deserving of preservation on that ground ; as well as from the honorable light in which they exhibit the minister's high-minded independ-

ence, and from the singular lesson which they afford that, even in appointments nominally in the gift of the Crown, kings themselves cannot always have their own way.

Fife House, April 12th, 1821.

Lord Liverpool has had the honour of receiving the letter which your Majesty has been graciously pleased to send to him by Sir B. Bloomfield.

Lord Liverpool can assure your Majesty that it was his most anxious desire to have conformed to your Majesty's wishes respecting the vacant canonry of Windsor, as far as he could do so consistently with his public duty. When Sir B. Bloomfield first named to him by mistake —, Lord Liverpool requested that he would send him all particulars about —, and he only wished time to make the necessary enquiries, and begged that your Majesty might not be committed on the subject until Lord Liverpool had ascertained how far he could reconcile the selection with his official responsibility.

It was Lord Liverpool's conscientious opinion, upon enquiry, that the appointment of — to a canonry at Windsor, under all the present circumstances, would be most injurious to your Majesty's interests, and would give great umbrage to that part of the Establishment which is so strongly and deeply attached to your Majesty and your Government.

Lord Liverpool has since received ample confirmation of the truth of this first impression, which he intended to communicate to your Majesty in his representation of last week. Lord Liverpool is most sincerely anxious to relieve your Majesty from any difficulties in which your Majesty may be involved in this most painful business: he will be desirous therefore of recommending — for a valuable living in the gift of the Crown as soon as there is an opening; and it will afterwards be a matter of consideration in what degree and to what extent —'s further prospects in the Church can be promoted.

Brighton, April 13th, 1821.

It is with considerable regret that the King has received Lord Liverpool's letter of yesterday, and the more as the King feels that ever since the appointment of Lord Liverpool as his first

minister he has not merely shown an uniform desire not to thwart any views of Lord Liverpool or of his friends in the disposal of the patronage of the Crown ; but, on the contrary, to oblige Lord Liverpool, and to give every support in his power to an Administration created by himself, the King has yielded every personal feeling.

In illustration of which the King need only draw Lord Liverpool's attention to two very recent events amongst numberless others, namely, the removal of Lord Fife (a measure certainly painful to the King's private feelings), and the disregard of the King's desire (conveyed to Lord Liverpool through Sir Benjamin Bloomfield) "that Mr. B. Paget should succeed to the office of Receiver-General." Notwithstanding which the appointment of another individual (however eligible) took place without further reference to the King.

Under so extraordinary a proceeding did the King withhold his signature to the warrant of appointment ? or did the King call upon Lord Liverpool to forfeit his promise or his word ? The King might also add the instance in which he sacrificed the most painful personal feelings and opinions to the advice and earnest desire of Lord Liverpool "that the King should not accept the resignation of Mr. Canning, but suffer him to remain in his councils," in spite of the very unwarrantable conduct of that gentleman (as a member of the Cabinet) in his place in Parliament.

The question of this nomination to the vacant canonry of Windsor does not rest upon the selection which the King has made for that appointment ; nor does the King doubt the sincerity of Lord Liverpool's desire to make a suitable provision in lieu of that destined by the King for —. But there are principles paramount to all other considerations which will ever guide the King in his course through life. Lord Liverpool, in his desire to relieve the King from any embarrassment which the present case may occasion, appears solely to have directed his view to the policy or impolicy of this nomination, and wholly to have disregarded that vital point of the transaction which involves the good faith and honour of his sovereign.

The King therefore sees no reason to alter his determination of appointing — to the vacant canonry of Windsor ; and, how-

ever willing the King might be to give up his own opinions to Lord Liverpool's wishes, it is no longer a question of the propriety of this little appointment (as the King has already stated), but whether the King's word is to be held sacred or is to be of no avail.

The King acquainted Lord Liverpool that the appointment was given by himself alone, unsolicited by —, or at the instance of any private friend of the King's or of —. His merit and his character were his only recommendations, and the King thinks such recommendations more calculated to do honour and to give satisfaction than to give "umbrage" to the Church.

Fife House, April 14th, 1821.

Lord Liverpool has received with the most profound respect, but at the same time with the deepest concern, your Majesty's letter. Lord Liverpool must in the first instance beg your Majesty's permission to allude to the circumstances mentioned in the earlier part of that letter. He can assure your Majesty, that both with respect to the removal of Lord Fife and to the request to your Majesty not to accept Mr. Canning's resignation in the summer of last year, he was actuated by no personal hostility to the former, nor by any regard or favour to the latter, but solely by the consideration of what appeared to him to be essential for the strength and solidity of your Majesty's Government.

With respect to the suggested appointment of Mr. Berkeley Paget to be Receiver-General of the Customs, Lord Liverpool immediately wrote to Sir Benjamin Bloomfield to state that there were circumstances in Mr. B. Paget's situation which would render his appointment to such an office impossible.

Lord Liverpool further desired Mr. Arbuthnot to communicate confidentially to Sir Benjamin Bloomfield what those circumstances were; and Lord Liverpool is bound to add in his own justification as to the appointment which afterwards took place to the same office, that after nearly thirty years' experience he can confidently state that it never has been the custom to take the King's pleasure as to the appointments to revenue offices; that whether formally under the Sign Manual or not, they have always been considered as Treasury appointments;

and he does not believe that an instance can be found in which the late King or in which your Majesty ever thought proper to interfere in an appointment of this nature.

Upon the point on which your Majesty has thought fit more particularly to communicate your sentiments and wishes to Lord Liverpool, Lord Liverpool is called upon to state that he is actuated upon the present occasion by no predilection in favour of, nor disposition towards, any individual, but solely by what he is deliberately convinced is due to your Majesty's interests, and to the welfare of your Government.

Lord Liverpool would never commit your Majesty without your Majesty's authority ; and even if he should have held out expectations to which your Majesty might afterwards not be reconciled, he would feel it his duty to subject himself to any inconvenience which might arise in consequence of such disappointment.

Lord Liverpool could recal to your Majesty's recollection cases in which it could not but be distinctly admitted that the expectation which might have been personally held out by the Sovereign was subject to the responsibility of his ministers, and that it must be a sufficient answer on such an occasion that the appointment has been obstructed in a quarter which cannot by the laws of the country be passed by.

Lord Liverpool can assure your Majesty that it would be the greatest possible relief to his mind to be enabled to conform to your Majesty's wishes ; but, after the most painful consideration, he is satisfied that he should not have effectually discharged his duty to your Majesty by any other advice than that which he took the liberty of most humbly submitting in the first letter which he addressed to Sir Benjamin Bloomfield on this subject, and in the last which he ventured to write to your Majesty.

Eventually the King gave way. He was well aware that not only did his statement, that the appointment on which he insisted had not been solicited by any of his personal friends, require some qualification, but that it was no secret who that friend was, or to what cause she owed her influence over him ; and to quarrel with his minister on such a ground would have been to outrage public



opinion, already sufficiently irritated by the display of that influence, too severely. But it cannot be doubted that his Majesty was deeply offended and mortified at his defeat;<sup>1</sup> and throughout the rest of the year he showed abundant signs of his displeasure by great coldness towards the principal members of the Cabinet, and still more by paying marked attention to some of the leaders of the Opposition.

Under these circumstances Lord Liverpool recurred to his project of strengthening the Ministry by some fresh accessions; which indeed he had, as has been already said, only postponed, and which were in some degree forced on him by Lord Sidmouth, who was beginning to feel the inroads of age, and a consequent wish for relief from the labours of so arduous an office as that which he filled. The most important reinforcement for which he had hoped, that of Canning, he was still compelled to forego; though he had to a certain extent overcome the King's reluctance to readmit that statesman to the Cabinet;<sup>2</sup> but Canning himself, not wishing to be forced upon his Majesty, had begun to listen with willingness, if not with eagerness, to the idea of succeeding Lord Hastings as Governor-

<sup>1</sup> A long letter of the Duke of Wellington to Lord Liverpool, written in October of this year, says: "As I told you at Walmer, the King has never forgiven your opposition to his wishes in the case of—. This feeling has influenced every action of his life in relation to his Government from that moment; and, I believe, to more than one of us he avowed that his objection to Mr. Canning was, that his accession to the Government was peculiarly desirable to you. Nothing can be more unjust or more unfair than this feeling; and, as there is not one of your colleagues who did not highly approve of what you did respecting —, so there is not one of them who would not suffer with you all the consequences of that act."

<sup>2</sup> The King had been so far brought to listen to reason by Lord Liverpool, that he at last consented to waive his objections to Canning's admission to the Cabinet, if it should be found that Lord Hastings was unwilling to relinquish the Indian Government, a point on which, for a time, there was some uncertainty. See a letter from Canning to Lord Morley, December 12th, 1821 (G. Canning and his Times, 325, § 8).

General of India. The directors of the Company were exceedingly anxious for his appointment ; he himself, while President of the Board of Control, had acquired a thorough insight into the leading features and requirements of Indian policy ; and, apart from the splendour of the position as ruler for a time of the most extensive and populous dominion in the world, the field which it offers for the display of almost every kind of ability and the acquisition of almost every kind of fame, presents great attractions to a man of energy and ambition such as were at all times the leading features of Canning's character. Accordingly early in the year it was settled that he should exchange England for Bengal, with the promise of a peerage at the close of his Asiatic service ; and, as a reinforcement to his Cabinet at home, the Prime Minister was forced to content himself with the substitution of Mr. Peel for Lord Sidmouth, and Mr. Charles Wynne, the member for Montgomeryshire, as the representative of the Grenville family, with whom he was nearly connected. Peel proved, as from his past experience of his talents as Secretary in Ireland Lord Liverpool felt assured that he would prove, an acquisition of the greatest importance. But that Mr. Wynne should ever have been thought of as a Cabinet minister was a singular instance of the way in which a crafty possessor of borough influence can at times employ it to gain his ends. For he was a man of the most ordinary capacity,<sup>1</sup> and remarkable indeed for nothing but a ridiculously thin squeaking voice, and the same overweening idea of his own importance which had distinguished every member of the house of Grenville for two generations. Lord Grenville was the only living member of the family in the least distinguished for ability, and even he, at all times, as we have seen, had

<sup>1</sup> Even his own friends had but a poor opinion of his fitness for State employment. Mr. Fremantle writes to Lord Buckingham : " Indeed, I may fairly say to you that Wynne's appointment is considered much beyond his pretensions." — *Memoirs of the Court of George IV.* i. 165.

been nearly as remarkable for pride and capricious temper as for statesmanship. Of late years he had broken in a great measure with his Whig allies of 1806, and on every question except that which related to the treatment of the Roman Catholics, was now disposed to agree with Lord Liverpool. He, however, had avowedly retired from public life, and was altogether resolved never again to take office. But the head of his house, the Marquis of Buckingham, was actuated by different feelings: he wanted a dukedom. At the time of the overthrow of Napoleon he had sought to gain his end through the interposition of the restored King of France, whom he had on more than one occasion entertained with sumptuous hospitality; and now, in the desire of the Prime Minister for an union with his party, he saw an opportunity of pressing his claim with greater effect. He also desired office: Cabinet office if possible; if not, the government of Ireland, or even of India. And he so far estimated his own talents correctly that he was equally fit, or unfit, for either. So long as he could obtain his object, neither he nor any of his family were scrupulous about the means. And, when they saw that the King was disposed to coquet with the Whigs, they too began to feel their way with that party.<sup>1</sup> They would even have preferred a junction with them to one with the

<sup>1</sup> In September, Mr. Wynne wrote to the Marquis: "My uncle (Lord Grenville) has, I find, returned from Bowood, strongly impressed with the wish of Lord Lansdowne to form an Administration in conjunction with us, if he can effect it. Certainly this is what I should individually prefer to any other arrangement."—Duke of Buckingham's *Memoirs of the Court of George IV.* i. 198. Another letter, in the same collection, from Lord Glastonbury to the Marquis, congratulating him on "his advancement to the highest rank in the peerage," adds, "This was the object of your good father, through the whole course of his life, as it has been of yours." It is not often that a man is willing to exhibit a father's meanness and arrogance as unshrinkingly as is done in this remarkable publication. But it must be admitted that, hardly as the late Duke of Buckingham deals with strangers, no party or individual suffers as much from his revelations as his own family.

existing Ministry if they could have seen an equal probability that they would be able to serve their purpose, and their final acceptance of Lord Liverpool's proposals only proceeded from a conviction that he was more firmly seated than they had at first supposed. Of that double-faced policy Lord Liverpool had of course no suspicion. He was himself at Bath, seeking relief from the waters for some symptoms which began to give his friends uneasiness, and were probably the forerunners of the attack to which he eventually succumbed; and consequently the preliminary steps of the negotiation were conducted by Lord Londonderry. The terms which he was authorised to offer were magnificent, or, if after the event we look at the utmost benefit which seems to have been derivable from the alliance, extravagant. The Marquis was to get his dukedom. Mr. Wynne was to be entrusted with the interests and vast patronage of India; one of his brothers was to be sent as envoy to Switzerland; while others of the adherents of the family were to be made privy councillors. One promotion, which was in some degree connected with this new alliance, was both creditable and serviceable to any Ministry, though it was so far from being wholly caused by that arrangement that Lord Liverpool had contemplated it before he began to think of admitting the Grenvilles in general to a share in the Government; Mr. Plunkett became Attorney-General in Ireland, an office which he had filled as long before as in Pitt's last Ministry, and in which he had been afterwards maintained by Lord Grenville, to whom he consequently uniformly acknowledged obligation and attachment. Mr. Plunkett was not only a sound lawyer, but, as an orator, inferior to no one but Canning in either House of Parliament; and, as Lord Liverpool wrote to the Lord Lieutenant, Lord Talbot, "he had supported the Government on several great emergencies, particularly on the renewal of the war in 1815, and on the measures for preserving the internal peace of the country in the past year, in a manner which gave weight to



his character, and importance to the line he might take on public questions, that would render his opposition most formidable. Nor, as Lord Liverpool believed, was there any difference of opinion between himself and Mr. Plunkett, except upon the Catholic question, on which the Government was divided." He had also a high opinion of Mr. Plunkett's disinterestedness, especially as contrasted with the conduct of others, for "he had the satisfaction of knowing that he was not disposed to press his pretensions inconveniently, or to make his support of the Ministry in any way conditional." The following letters from Lord Londonderry are amusing and instructive, as showing how such negotiations are managed, and also as displaying the playful genial spirit which the negotiator brought to his work, and to which his melancholy end, so near at hand, affords a painful contrast :

*Private and confidential.*

Foreign Office, December 5th, 1821.

MY DEAR LIVERPOOL,

I understood yesterday from Arbuthnot that Fremantle had expressed some surprise to the Duke of Wellington that Lord Sidmouth's remaining in Cabinet had never been opened by you to Lord Buckingham. This prepared me for a note which I received last night from Lord Buckingham at Cray, informing me that Wynne was come to town, and that they wished to see me before they wrote to you. I went to town for this purpose, and saw them together in Pall Mall this forenoon.

I was enabled at once to explain the omission of your not having mentioned Lord Sidmouth's remaining in the Cabinet; that it grew out of your never feeling that it could affect the arrangement. I stated that this was not a point ever made by Lord Sidmouth, but one desired by the King and wished by the rest of the Cabinet as a mark of respect to Lord Sidmouth. I think they were a little more jealous of the Protestant and Catholic question than is desirable; but this will wear off if they fall into our rank. I think the tone on the office of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was much mended. I gave them



such other explanations as they desired, and much recommended Wynne, if he had any doubts, to run down to Bath, and have a conversation with yourself, which would be, I had no doubt, satisfactory to both. I should upon the whole think they will take, but until we have travelled some miles together you must expect to find them rather ticklish cattle.

My conversation with Huskisson has, I believe, done good. I think I can now positively assure you that whatever may be the decision of the Grenvilles he will remain with us and act cordially.

I hope your health will derive benefit from your excursion to Bath.

Ever, my dear Lord, yours most sincerely,

LONDONDERRY.

*Private and confidential.*

Foreign Office, December 6th, 1821.

MY DEAR LIVERPOOL,

I am afraid in my letter of yesterday I may have expressed myself somewhat too strongly in disapprobation of the Grenville disposition to criticise. Upon reflection, and after conversing with the Duke of Wellington and Lord Sidmouth, I wish to correct myself if I have done so ; and I hope, if Wynne goes down to you, you will receive him with cordiality, and not mind his little difficulties, as we all feel the great importance of your not losing, if possible, this connexion ; and we must always recollect that recruits who have, as the Grenvilles have, to cross the floor of the House of Commons, are always more thin-skinned than persons who, like Peel, are already at home amongst our ranks.

That our language as far as possible may be consistent, I will shortly state the course of my reasoning. With respect to Lord Sidmouth, I stated that his remaining in the Cabinet had never been a feeling of his own, that it had arisen from the general sentiment of his colleagues, but especially had been decided on to meet a strong feeling of the King's ; that his so continuing was stated in your original minute of June to his Majesty, when the basis of the whole arrangement had been submitted ; and that it had since been renewed as a matter of course, and that, if it had never been touched upon in conversation either by you or myself, the omission could arise

from no disposition to concealment, but really resulted from considering the arrangement as almost a matter of course, and one that could give occasion to no discussion or difficulty.

When it was stated as making the colour of the Government more Protestant than they had expected, I told them that with opinions similar to their own upon the Catholic question, I was one of the Cabinet the most anxious for Lord Sidmouth's remaining amongst us; and that as long as the Government was constituted upon its present principles, which placed the gist of the Catholic question, not in Cabinet, but in Parliament, I attach very little importance whether the votes in Cabinet were equal on the question, or on which side they preponderated; that the members of it should be selected with a view to the efficient administration of the country in matters on which we could agree, and not with reference to a question on which it was notorious we could not. It was true when Canning resigned in a Cabinet on it, we were 7 Catholics to 7 Protestants, and that in the proposed Cabinet we should only be 6 Catholics to 8 Protestants; but it was not less true that in your original Cabinet in 1812 the members were 5 to 7, giving the Protestants the same relative superiority; but this I regarded as of no importance to the fate of the question itself, and none to the structure of a Government which happily was not one of controversy, but of union within itself, which he (Mr. Wynne) would find to be the case if he should join us.

I think, upon the whole, the tone was concurrence, though with some difficulties. The Treasury objection was evidently much softened; I should say, nearly given up in the personal sense. The prospect of efficiency in the Home Department of the House of Commons was admitted to be as decided a change for the better, as in their view Lord Wellesley's appointment to Ireland was. My impression is, that they will not give their answer till they have heard from Plunkett and talked again with Lord Grenville, with whom I suspect most of these cavils originate, and who never parts from a false notion after he has once embraced it. Lord Buckingham is evidently desirous to make it do, and my expectation is that it will, as on public grounds it ought to do; but then I think they will consider office for Plunkett as a *sine quâ non*, nor do I see, after all that has

passed, how you, without letting down the authority if not the good faith of the Government, can do otherwise than insist upon the office of Attorney-General being opened for him, where the means so abundantly exist of softening the change to Saurin, if a local intrigue does not disappoint their application. Lord Sidmouth will apprize you of the scrape into which the Irish Government have got by calling together all the out pensioners in order to attach them to the regiments of the line, which is undoubtedly illegal, they being only liable to serve in garrison or veteran battalions. We have had a Cabinet to-day, at which the Duke of Wellington, Palmerston, and Goulburn assisted; and it has been decided, partly for the sake of the force itself, and partly in order to save the character of the Irish Government, which would be worse than humiliated if these people were brought together merely to be dismissed, to authorise the formation of from 3,000 to 5,000 of these men in garrison or veteran battalions. The Duke of Wellington has gone to the Horse Guards to arrange with Taylor as to officers, deprecating any nominations which would entitle the parties to full pay upon reduction.

I have seen Huskisson to-day. We are now sure of him, however Wynne may decide; but I attach so much importance to the Grenville connexion not being left loose in the House of Commons for obvious reasons that, although ready to try our strength, if necessary, without them, I cannot too strongly urge their acquisition, though I feel it will require some time to assimilate them. I am confident you will feel as I do upon the whole of this question, and that you will make love in your best manner to whichever of these charmers may come within your reach.

I understand there is a concert at Brighton on Monday. If so, I shall endeavour to go down, as the King will be getting somewhat impatient to know where you are in your arrangements.

I saw a few lines to Marsden to-day from Plunkett, written after the change was known to him. His dispositions to connexion are in no degree relaxed.

Ever, my dear Lord,

Yours very sincerely,

LONDONDERRY.



*Secret and confidential.*

Cray Farm, December 9th, 1821.

MY DEAR LIVERPOOL,

C. Wynne is now here, and I have had, upon the whole, a very satisfactory conversation with him. My former impression was correct. The Grenvilles will finally accept your offer, and join your Government with cordiality ; but you must allow them to come to you in their own way, and, in order to satisfy their principles of consistency, they will make the reserves which past opinion require, and criticise what they think might be amended, but they will make no ultimate objections.

The course which I understand will be pursued is, that Wynne will not go to Bath, but write to you a letter. After you have replied to him, the general decision will be taken, and communicated to you by Lord Buckingham. This is already, in fact, taken, but you must not assume this from what I now write. In answering Wynne's letter, I should recommend you where you cannot go along with him in his reasoning to commend his candour, to treat his observations as deserving attention if the question now was the formation of an entirely new arrangement, but that, where there is a concurrence on all leading principles, you trust he will not suffer minor difficulties to prevent a concert from which the King's service may derive such efficient aid. In short, let him have his explanation, and consider his comments as constituting no difficulty to our union. In this way you will be sure of taking this connection out of that central position in the House of Commons which invites intrigue, and might facilitate an intermediate arrangement. I regard this as constituting the preponderating motive for forming this connection, which, having once incorporated with your management, I think your Government will be equal to any emergency. I have apprized Wynne in confidence of the position in which Canning stands with regard to India : you will have every facility with him upon that point. He asked me about Sturges Bourne retiring, and also whether Binning would remain. I told him I had heard that the former certainly meant to retire, but that I did not know anything of Binning's resignation. I mentioned Huskisson's remaining.

I shall go to-morrow to Brighton, and shall confidentially apprise

the King of your progress in arrangements. I look upon it now that you see daylight in all directions.

I had a long and very satisfactory conversation with Lord Wellesley about Ireland ; and, as I shall meet both his Lordship and Goulburn to-morrow, I shall endeavour to renew the subject with them shortly. I hope Goulburn and Peel will go to you together at Bath ; you can then have an understanding with both, and especially upon the point with Plunkett. It is of the last importance, from their Protestant opinions, that they should lend their assistance to smooth the change, and to make it felt that it must be. If they manage it well, and make it felt as part of a large measure to strengthen the Government, and to bring an able Irish lawyer into the parliamentary ranks, the matter will go smoothly. If they are glum or fractious, the change may become an angry party topic, and receive the odious character of sacrificing Saurin to Plunkett.

I remain, my dear Liverpool,

Ever yours sincerely,

LONDONDERRY.

On receiving the last, Lord Liverpool wrote to Mr. Wynne himself to ratify the treaty. His new allies were all in favour of concessions to the Roman Catholics, but Lord Liverpool considered that the fact of this question being left open was actually a benefit to it at the moment, in whatever way it might be settled. "He was fully persuaded," he said to his new recruit, "that in the state in which that question now was, and under all the circumstances of the country, fewer public evils were likely to arise from the adoption or rejection of the Catholic claims under a government of a mixed character, than might occur under one exclusively Protestant or exclusively Catholic, as for brevity's sake he might designate the two parties."

In some respects the prospects of the ensuing year were unpromising, as Lord Liverpool wrote to the Chancellor of the Exchequer in December : "The distress in many of the agricultural districts was certainly very great," and both he and Vansittart began to anticipate a demand for relief in the shape of a reduction of taxation, which could



not well be afforded. Though the principle of the Sinking Fund had been broken in upon, if not abandoned, ministers had not yet finally renounced the idea of effecting a rapid diminution of the national debt by the steady levy of a considerable surplus; and a letter from Vansittart to Lord Liverpool, of the 20th of December, speaks of "a surplus of five millions" as the condition of the revenue which was indispensable to the prosperity, if not to the safety of the kingdom. And this was the relief to which he wished those who were most inclined to complain of their difficulties to trust; as he wrote the same week: "A real relief to the landed interest must be produced, if they will have patience to wait for it, by the increased circulation, and greater facility of accommodation arising out of a clear sinking fund and the accumulation of moneyed and commercial wealth;" and he appealed to the experience of former years to justify this view of the question, as "in the years 1817, 1818, a similar relief was produced by the Government borrowing from the Bank and augmenting the general circulation." At the same time he saw the probability of having to face a "most violent clamour for some more efficacious" (or in other words, more rapid) "measures;" and, anticipating with great correctness the direction which, in one instance at least, the clamour was likely to take, he owned that, "much as the discussion of a corn bill was to be deprecated, yet, as some discussion was inevitable, he thought some modification of the corn law on reasonable principles would be the safest course which could be taken, so as to couple with some protection to agriculture a relaxation of the monopolising spirit of our commercial and colonial system. This, which was what at all times might have been wise, was now, through the altered state of the world, imperiously called for, and he even thought it would contribute to soothe the landowners to find that something was done to diminish (in their view of the subject) the protection so long afforded to the commercial interest."

## CHAPTER XXVII.

Disaffection in Ireland—Whiteboys and Rockites—Great scarcity in the south and west—A Government grant is given, and a large private subscription is opened in England—Measures of legal coercion—The renewal of the Insurrection Bill and the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act are introduced—Lord Liverpool reviews the whole state of Ireland—Insurrection in Ireland had been directed against *property* only—The tithe question in Ireland—Canning's motion to relieve Roman Catholic peers from restrictions—Measures for the relief of the agricultural interest—General feeling in favour of a tax on Corn—Lord Liverpool's speech on the subject—Great increase of the resources of the country, in every respect, since the beginning of the century—Death of Lord Londonderry—The King's visit to Scotland—The Duke of Wellington goes as Ambassador to the Congress of Verona—Mr. Canning becomes Foreign Secretary—Mr. Robinson becomes Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Huskisson President of the Board of Trade—Correspondence with Mr. Peel on Ireland—Letter to Lord Eldon on Irish Tithes.

As the spring advanced the distress of the English agriculturists greatly diminished, partly in consequence of a favorable season, and partly from the healing influence of time, which was gradually readjusting the different interests, to the disarrangement of whose operations their sufferings had been in a great degree attributable. But, on the other hand, the beginning of 1822 saw Ireland in a more miserable and dangerous condition than ever. The Marquis of Wellesley had recently been appointed Lord Lieutenant, and his being an Irishman, with notoriously Irish sympathies on the cardinal point of Catholic emancipation, was a circumstance which Lord

Liverpool had reasonably expected to have great weight in pacifying the discontented, from the assurance which it unquestionably held out of the most perfect impartiality between the different religious parties in the island. But so far were the minister's hopes from being realised that it seemed rather as if the arrival of the new Viceroy was the signal for a recommencement of outrages of a more systematic and organized character than ever. Nor were they confined to one district only; the most serious exhibitions of violence and lawlessness took place indeed, as usual, in the south; but Dublin and the adjacent counties were ascertained also to be the seats of illegal societies, and Ulster itself seemed no longer inclined to rest in peaceful enjoyment of its rapidly increasing prosperity. The pretext in most districts was discontent at the arrangements for levy of tithe. But that was soon seen to be only a pretext; at meetings which were held in different places the payment of rent was protested against with almost equal energy; the denunciation of the landlord was coupled with the threats against the parson and the tithe-proctor; and the events of the winter proved that any kind of property was sufficient to make its possessors a mark for insult and depredation, and not seldom for slaughter. Not for many years, if we may not say generations, had outrages been conducted on so large a scale, or in such open defiance of every authority. In more than one instance they assumed the proportions of insurrection. More than one band of robbers, calling themselves Whiteboys or Rockites, was estimated by the hundred; and one which was encountered near Macroom in the county of Cork by a body of troops was computed by the officer in command to amount to nearly 5,000 men, some of whom ventured even to fire upon him, though, as the soldiers pressed forward, they presently fled and left him several prisoners. In several other places also they attacked the troops; but, after a time, finding that they were always defeated, they desisted from such

bold measures, and contented themselves with traversing parts of the country where there was no military force to encounter; and there they openly attacked houses, even in broad daylight, plundered them of all that was most easily moveable, and especially of arms, and often assaulted and even murdered the inmates with the most ferocious cruelty.

These outrages had not the excuse of distress, for they commenced many weeks before any unusual want existed. But before the end of the winter the misery which they had caused was fearfully aggravated by a scarcity, which was but little short of absolute destitution and famine. The autumn had been so wet that in the southern and western counties the potatoes rotted in the ground; and they were almost the sole dependence of the peasantry. Even such food as was procurable rose to a price wholly beyond the means of the labourer to purchase, while as prices rose employment fell off; and before Easter it was reported that people were actually perishing of starvation, and that this was likely to be the fate of thousands if some means of affording relief were not instantly devised. The transactions of the next few weeks ought to have reconciled the most disaffected Irishman to an union with England. Not only did the Government with great promptitude place large sums at the Lord Lieutenant's disposal for the supply of the sufferers, but a private subscription was opened in every county in England, by which a quarter of a million of money was raised with extraordinary rapidity and transmitted by the speediest instalments to Dublin. So ungrudging was the liberality of England on this occasion that the amount collected proved at last to exceed even the necessities which were to be supplied; and, after all were fed and many clothed, enough remained to enable the managers of the fund to devote large sums to the wise object of endeavouring to effect a permanent improvement of the condition of the labouring classes of the most impoverished districts by encouraging fisheries on



the western coast, which swarms with the choicest fish, then, as now, left almost undisturbed; and in the southern counties by stimulating the establishment of linen manufactories such as had already proved a source of wealth to the north.

Such feelings of sympathy with the real wants of Ireland animating, as they were thus proved to do, the whole population of Britain, were so far from being inconsistent with an unshrinking determination to repress and chastise crime that they even rendered that resolution the more necessary. It was due alike to English and to Irish that the exertions made with such magnificent liberality should not be wasted or rendered ineffectual through the impunity of outrage. And therefore at the first meeting of Parliament the minister could conscientiously announce his intention of proposing vigorous measures for vindicating the majesty of the law and re-establishing order and security in Ireland. The King's speech had called the attention of Parliament to the subject, and, in the debate on the Address, Lord Liverpool gave an intimation of the course intended, which before the end of the week he followed up by the introduction of the necessary measures.

It was remarkable that the mover of the address, speaking with authority on the subject, inasmuch as he was an Irish peer constantly resident in the country, Lord Roden, had affirmed as a fact beyond dispute that "a vast improvement in the condition of Ireland had taken place, particularly within the last ten years" (a period, it may be observed, exactly coincident with the duration of the existing Ministry); and Lord Liverpool himself, in commenting on his speech and on that of others, pointed out as "a singular circumstance, that in the disturbed districts, where the laws were daily transgressed, no hostility was manifested towards his Majesty's Government. In all their discontents and excesses the people never quarrelled with the Government as a government; they had no political object in view; nor did religion enter largely into the motives or pretexts of their outrages. The origin of these



crimes appeared to lie deeper in the frame of society. It was impossible not to see that the insurrection" (for he did not scruple to give it that name) "was one directed in the first instance against certain property, and against the lives of the owners of such property; that, though it had begun in private views and in a spirit of dissatisfaction with particular persons, the spirit had widely diffused itself, and was in danger of becoming general throughout the country. Already, indeed, it was no longer possible to look on it as an ebullition of local discontent, or as a disorder confined to particular districts; it rather appeared as part of a connected system which had its centre from which it moved, and from which the leaders were spreading it in every direction." To put down such a system was evidently the first of all duties; and with this view he moved the House to renew the Insurrection Bill, and to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act for six months. The emergency was so manifest that the House of Commons had already passed the necessary votes by a great majority; and the same considerations had even greater weight with the Peers; where the only opposition attempted to the minister's proposals was a suggestion of Lord King to abridge the duration of the coercive measures by ten weeks. The standing orders were suspended; and by Saturday night in the same week in which the Houses met, the bills were passed: such a display of decision on the part of the Government, and of a feeling very like unanimity in the Parliament being in itself not slightly calculated to strike terror into the leaders and authors of these disturbances. And so successful was the whole policy of the Government with respect to Ireland that, at the beginning of the next year, the King was able to congratulate the Houses on its improved condition and prospects; and the ordinary laws were once more recognised as sufficient to maintain tranquillity.

These acts of vigour were the more effective because they were no spasmodic efforts of sudden indignation, but

parts of a deliberate and generous policy. There is, in fact, if they are properly regarded, something generous and fearless in the mere act of proposing extraordinary laws of coercion. For, as it is never difficult to find plausible reasons for misrepresenting and resisting them, those who recommend them are deliberately encountering opposition and a certain degree of unpopularity, from a resolution to perform the first duty of government, the protection of life and property, and the repression and chastisement of crime. Nor would Lord Liverpool condescend to endeavour to mitigate the opposition of his political adversaries by allowing himself to be diverted in the least from the course on which he had decided; but when Lord Lansdowne moved an abstract resolution "that the state of Ireland required the immediate attention of Parliament, with a view to improve the condition of the people and more effectually to secure its permanent tranquillity," though there was no word in it with which Lord Liverpool could hesitate to proclaim his agreement; though some of the evils on which the Marquis dilated were the very same which had made the greatest impression on himself; and some of the remedies which the Marquis suggested were not very dissimilar to those which he himself was preparing to adopt; he yet resisted the resolution on the very ground that the whole Ministry was so convinced of its truth that it was superfluous; and that to adopt it would be to imply a censure both on the Administration and more especially on the Irish Government and Lord Wellesley, as if they and he had required such a vote to convince them of so obvious a duty. In moving the previous question he took a very full view of the whole state of Ireland, and of the temper of the people, which even at the present day is not uninstructional, since it shows how little the Irish really had to complain of; and, as a corollary to the fact thus established, how compatible among an impulsive, and unreasoning, and easily-led population is the existence of vehement and even general discontent with an almost total

absence of grievances, except such as are brought at times on all nations, by the unavoidable operation of causes beyond human control, such as war or scarcity ; and, while extending his survey over the whole country, he, by implication, passed a deserved censure on those who took no care to make such a labour the preliminary to an expression of opinion on the subject. He complained that the generality of talkers made no "endeavour to find out the causes of the evils which afflicted Ireland before proposing a remedy ; and it was, in his judgment, owing to their neglect to do so that no effectual remedy had yet been applied. On the contrary, it was always the interest of faction to give an explanation of grievances entirely at variance with their real causes ; to represent evils as growing out of the measures of Government ; to trace disturbance and discontent to the conduct of this or that Administration. In considering, however, the state of Ireland, or of any other country, there was always a distinction to be borne in mind : first, whether the evils of the state arose out of the situation in which the governors stood to the governed ; secondly, whether they grew out of the relative state in which the great body of the people, those who laboured for their daily subsistence, stood to those who possessed property. On those principles did the situation of every state in the history of the world, from the beginning of time to the present day, depend. He would undertake to show, if the case of Ireland were considered fairly, that nine-tenths of the evils which afflicted Ireland were not to be ascribed to the measures directed by Government, but to the state of society in that country, and the relation of those who laboured to those who possessed property. He could adduce the whole history of Ireland in support of this position. With the exception of the year 1798, all the insurrections in Ireland had been directed, not against the Government, but against property. In the different seditious handbills and notices which were issued religious differences were sometimes mentioned (though only in a

very slight degree); but scarcely any notice was ever taken of the Government. He stated this because it was necessary to a due consideration of the state of Ireland, not as a matter of gratification; for, indeed, if the disturbances were caused by any evils occasioned by the measures of Government, it would be much more easy to arrive at and correct the cause, than it was to devise a remedy for mischiefs the source of which it was so difficult to approach." He proceeded to point out how far, in truth, Ireland was from having any real evil to complain of; of course ignoring, as with his opinions on the subject it was inevitable that he should ignore, the restrictions still maintained upon the Roman Catholics; and so far, but so far only, exposing a vulnerable side of his argument; but on other points fully establishing his position. "If they looked to the constitution of this country, and to the manner in which it was enjoyed in the three portions of the empire, they would find that Ireland had the full share of its benefits. True, in point of prosperity Scotland was superior to Ireland; but with respect to the popular part of a government Scotland possessed it in the least, and Ireland in the highest degree. Scotland possessed very little of what could be called popular representation; but in that matter England herself was far exceeded by Ireland. Out of a hundred members that represented Ireland, sixty-four were returned by counties: they were elected on a principle very nearly approaching to that of universal suffrage; and, with respect to the remainder, a very large portion were elected for populous places. Not less than eighty or ninety of those hundred members were returned, in the strictest sense of the word, by popular election. So that not only had Ireland in that respect nothing to complain of, but she had as extensive a system of popular representation as the most ardent reformer could desire." The argument is not invalidated by the fact that the speaker himself did certainly not look on the extreme lowness of the franchise in Ireland as a blessing (nor did Lord

Lansdowne, who had even suggested the restriction of it in certain cases, which he specified). It was sufficient for him that it was in harmony with the demands of the Radical party, and, being so, of course disabled them from complaining of a form of Government which secured it to them. "With respect to the laws," he continued, "Ireland enjoyed what Scotland did not enjoy, at least in its fullest extent: Ireland enjoyed the trial by jury to the same extent that England did; and the paucity of appeals abundantly testified to the ability and integrity with which justice was administered in the Irish courts, while measures had recently been set on foot to reform the grand jury system. In taxation Ireland was still more conspicuously favoured. Lord Lansdowne had himself admitted the fertility of her soil, and the solid wealth of the country. Yet while England, with a population of fourteen millions, paid annually fifty millions of taxes, five millions of Irishmen did not pay more than four millions. And England had taken the debt of Ireland on her own shoulders, and the interest of that debt was now paid out of the burthens laid on the people of this country. It was, therefore, no wish for political change which actuated the people of Ireland. It arose, as he had already stated, from the internal state of society in that country, and from the relative positions of those who had, and those who had not, property. He did not deny the existence of some causes of complaint; but it was not so easy to remedy them as to perceive them, as might be seen in the instance of the old laws affecting distillation some years before. In deference to the complaints made of them they had been repealed, and a new system had been adopted; but the alteration had so vastly increased intemperance and its concomitant disorders that the re-enactment of the old laws was almost universally demanded. Absenteeism no one could deny to be a most serious evil." It was remarkable that Lord Lansdowne himself had expressed doubts whether the effects of absenteeism had not been exaggerated. Being



perhaps partly influenced by the circumstance that he himself was almost a stranger on his Irish property, he had confessed "that he did not rate as high as some others the effect of absenteeism on the wealth and resources of the country." Lord Liverpool's views on the subject few will deny to have been the more correct; that it should be "a matter of indifference to a country whether large masses of money were drawn from it or spent in it he could not conceive. And the moral results of the absentee system he looked on as still more lamentable than its consequences, if looked at only as a question of political economy." But on any remedy for it he was silent, because in fact it is an evil that can be dealt with by none but the proprietors themselves.

The latter part of his speech has a peculiar interest at the present day, from the new character which has lately been given to the Church question in Ireland by the demands made by a section of the Romish priests for the total abolition of the Establishment, and by the aid which they have obtained from some who till recently were looked on as especially attached by principle to its maintenance. The question, however, as it at that time presented itself to the statesmen on either side of the House, did not touch the Establishment itself, for of the duty of upholding that no one entertained the slightest doubt, but simply the manner in which tithes should be collected. Lord Lansdowne had recommended a commutation of them, urging as two indispensable conditions of such a measure that "it should leave the Church in the same relative degree of wealth and respectability which it now enjoyed," and that "it should not render the Church more dependent on the State." And he further laid down as a guiding principle that "tithes were entitled to the same protection as other property, and must be dealt with as guardedly, not only for the sake of the Church itself, but for the advantage of the country." On this point Lord Liverpool fully agreed with him. "He would

maintain that tithes were as sacred as any other species of property. He would say that the proprietor who had bought an estate, or who inherited an estate, had bought or inherited nine parts of it only ; the tenth part was the property of the Church or of the lay impropiator as much as the other nine were the property of the purchaser or inheritor." And having thus laid down their inalienable right to these tithes, he proceeded to a practical justification of it by passing a well-merited eulogy on the owners. "He had no hesitation in saying that the clergy of Ireland were as valuable a set of men as any other class in the kingdom. He spoke of them not merely as clergymen, but as resident proprietors. The greater part of them were resident in their parishes, and they spent the income raised upon their flocks among their flocks ; while so great was their moderation that they did not, he believed, on the whole, receive half their dues. Indeed it was notorious that, where the proprietors relieved the occupiers from the payment of tithe, the tenant suffered, and paid more as rent alone than he would have had to pay if the tithe had been separated from it. He admitted, indeed, that the existing system was faulty, but it was faulty rather from the way in which it pressed on the clergyman than on the tithe-payer. And this was owing to the smallness of the holdings usual in Ireland. In England a tithe income of 400*l.* a year would probably be collected from thirty or forty persons, in Ireland from 1,400 to 1,500, and most of those the very poorest class. Such a state of affairs not only imposed a heavy burden of labour and anxiety on the clergyman, but opened a door to endless litigation. The remedy for it formed part of a plan which the Government had in contemplation ; but the present Lord Lieutenant, himself an Irishman, and strongly attached to the soil on which he had first drawn breath, was too solicitous for the real welfare of his country to recommend any measure before he had given it full consideration."

The question of the collection of tithe was, in truth, so

manifestly the most pressing of the difficulties of Ireland, as that which lay at the bottom of most of the others, that on the day preceding this debate Mr. Goulburn, the Irish Secretary, had introduced a bill on the subject, which was passed into a law in the ensuing year, when we shall have a fitter opportunity of seeing Lord Liverpool's opinion on that single point. But, while the passages which have just been quoted display a clear perception and full appreciation of the practical difficulties which surrounded, and still surround every attempt to ameliorate the condition of the Irish by the removal of any real grievances, they at the same time show with equal distinctness a resolution not to purchase even tranquillity for the country, much less ease for the Administration, by any abandonment of principle. And it was to this firmness on matters of principle that Lord Liverpool owed both the personal respect in which all held him, and also the success which attended him in all the Parliamentary conflicts which at different times menaced the continuance of his Government.

The Catholic question was revived this year in a somewhat singular form, and if the member who brought it forward in the House of Commons had been any one but Mr. Canning, the ablest and most self-sacrificing advocate that the Catholics had ever been able to boast, we should be inclined to say that the way in which he now presented their claims to Parliament wanted judgment. It would certainly not have followed, because the noblest born and most highly educated of the Roman Catholics, those who had most to gain from the favour of the Crown, and most to lose from any sweeping change, and moreover whose number was extremely limited, might be admitted, without danger to the State, to occupy the seats in Parliament which by hereditary right belonged to their titles, that therefore it might be safe or wise to entrust the same privilege without limitation to as many adherents of that religion as might procure election to the

House of Commons, and who might not improbably be so numerous, and on some questions so unanimous as on them to exercise a preponderating influence over the policy of the kingdom. Canning, however, either thought that he might succeed in carrying that part of Catholic emancipation which might be represented as the safest to grant, though he might fail in obtaining the whole; or perhaps was seduced himself, and fancied that Parliament might be allured by a proposal which bore at once the stamp of moderation and of novelty; and at the end of April he submitted to the House of Commons a motion to relieve Roman Catholic peers from the disabilities imposed upon them by an Act of the reign of Charles II. which deprived them of their seats in Parliament; for the law which excluded them from the Upper House was not identical with that which prohibited the election of Roman Catholic members to the Lower House. He carried his bill by small majorities of 5 and 12 in the House of Commons, being supported there by Lord Castlereagh himself, the leader of the House. But in the Lords it was resisted by all the leading members of the Government, though Lord Melville, the First Lord of the Admiralty, voted for it, and Lord Wellesley sent over his proxy in its favour; Lord Liverpool, who argued against it with great closeness and force, being aided in his reasoning by the line which had been taken by Lord Grey, whom he followed, and who had ventured on an assertion or argument which no one could possibly believe. "The noble Earl," Lord Liverpool began, "had said that this bill was not meant as a step to the general question. Supposing, then, it were to exclude the general question, he would ask whether it was fit, if it passed, that nothing else should be done? for no measure could be more mischievous to the Catholics than the passing of this bill if it were not intended to go further; and if that were really the case, then those who had hitherto been most favorable to concession ought to be the firmest in their resistance on the present occasion." And the limited,



and it may almost be said personal nature of the proposed relaxation, supplied him with another argument, of which he availed himself with great ingenuity, from that clause in the Bill of Rights which enacts that the sovereign shall always be a Protestant. "Surely the Catholic peer had no right to complain of not being allowed to sit and vote when, supposing the King from conscientious motives were to change his religion, he must descend from the throne of his ancestors. He should feel no difficulty in saying to the Duke of Norfolk, or to any other Catholic peer, all of whom he highly respected, that he had no right to be placed on a better footing than the King upon the throne." Another argument was supplied him by what was probably an oversight of the original framer of the bill. As it went only to provide for the repeal of special enactments, it did not touch the Irish peers, for the Acts mentioned were not those which disabled Roman Catholics from sitting in the Irish Parliament. He therefore contended that the question as now presented to Parliament rested on grounds wholly different from those which had been relied on as supplying reasons for a more general measure of relief.

"It had been urged upon every occasion that it was fit to repeal the Acts of exclusion for the sake of soothing the people of Ireland. There was not a single Irishman who would receive any benefit from this bill, the principle of which applied only to English Catholic peers; and could anything be more galling to Irish feeling than that such a concession as this should be made to English peers of the Roman Catholic persuasion while Irish peers of the same faith were excluded from its provisions? He had also another objection. He conceived that the showing this favour to Catholic peers without extending corresponding advantages to Catholic commoners, would not redound much to the honour or the credit of the peers themselves. Such a partial distinction would be obnoxious to every principle of equity. He was aware that in the reign of Elizabeth the Catholic peers had a right to sit in that



House, while the other members of the great Catholic body were not eligible to the other House of Parliament. But if their lordships considered how little the Catholic commonalty were then known as men of influence or property, the distinction then made would cease to create surprise. But on what principle could it rest now? He had been always taught to believe that though the possessions and privileges of the different classes of the British community might be different, yet their respective rights to them were the same; and he maintained that this equality of right, so far from weakening the title of the rich man to his possessions, was in fact his greatest security, since the rights of rich and poor thus stood on the same principle. And this reasoning he begged to apply to the case before their lordships. It was impossible to deny that the right of a commoner to be elected was of the same force as that of a peer to sit in the House of Lords; for on what principle could they say, 'We will not object to a peer sitting amongst us, though he does acknowledge a foreign jurisdiction in some matters of spiritual concern, but we will not permit a commoner to sit in Parliament under the same circumstances?' Could anything so invidious, so monstrous, so unjust as this be successfully proposed in modern times?" Another argument he derived from the presence of the bishops. "If their lordships looked to the nature of the duties and privileges which belonged to them, they would find that the concerns of religion were especially theirs. Now, if it was the right of any branch of the Legislature, surely it was the right of that branch above all others to require from its members some test of their attachment to the Established Church. Lord Grey had said that it was right to pass this bill, even if they did not go further in the business. On the contrary, he firmly believed that, if they should pass this bill and then take their stand against further concessions, it would be the most impolitic and mischievous measure imaginable. It was not calculated to effect any certain advantage: it settled nothing, but left

the general question precisely where it was before. It did nothing for that great interest the welfare and protection of which had hitherto been assigned as the grand objects with which the general question had been brought forward. All that it offered was a most unwise and invidious distinction between the peers and commonalty of a particular Church. The question into which the consideration of the measure must ultimately resolve itself was whether Roman Catholics generally should be admitted to a share in the Legislature. On this point he had already given his opinion. He thought that the concession of such a privilege would be most impolitic and dangerous, but to confine it, as this bill proposed to do, to Catholic peers, and to exclude from all participation in it the Catholic commonalty, would be equally dangerous and impolitic, and infinitely more inequitable and invidious."

Whatever may be thought of the reasonableness of the opposition to Catholic emancipation as a whole, there can be no doubt of the cogency of the Prime Minister's arguments against this partial enfranchisement. He carried with him a majority of above 40, in a House of 300 members. And it may not be far-fetched to infer that a proposal such as that which was thus rejected, did, when it came to be calmly considered after the close of the discussion, for a time weaken the case of the advocates of general emancipation, by seeming to show that some among them would be content with a half measure; or, what was still worse, that the Roman Catholic peers were themselves content to sever their cause from that of their untitled co-religionists.<sup>1</sup> At all events no division on the subject in the House of Commons had for many years been so unfavorable to the hopes of the Roman Catholics as that which rejected a motion in their favour by Mr. Plunkett in the next year: and as no other reason for a

<sup>1</sup> Canning himself, on introducing his motion, announced that he had received a letter from the Duke of Norfolk expressing his entire approbation of it.

change of feeling on the subject could be alleged, it seems probable that the advocates of emancipation felt themselves in some degree divided and discouraged by what was certainly a false move, though made by their ablest leader.

More important, however, for its bearing on the whole domestic policy of the Government, both past and future, was a discussion which at the beginning of the session took place on the subject of the distress of the agriculturists, which, though already showing signs of abatement, nevertheless had been so severe as to call loudly for measures calculated to prevent its recurrence; as far, that is, as sagacity in legislation and skill in administration can prevent or diminish sufferings which in a great degree depend on the dispensations of a higher power than man. In the House of Commons Lord Londonderry brought forward a series of measures calculated to give immediate relief of the agricultural interest; consisting of a reduction of the malt tax, a power of granting loans to farmers under certain regulations, and a revision of the corn law, lowering the price at which corn might hereafter be imported, and imposing a new scale of duties. As the idea of raising a revenue from the importation of corn has now been too completely abandoned for it to be possible that it should ever be revived, it is superfluous here to enter into any details of the discussion which took place, or of the amendments to the Government proposal which were unsuccessfully submitted to the House of Commons. It is sufficient to point out that the doctrine that such a tax was indefensible was not at this time promulgated by either party. On the contrary, the Whigs were even more earnest protectionists than the Tories, and their complaint of the Ministry was that they were inclined to sacrifice the farmer's interest to that of the foreign grower. But these proposals of the Government, which were not brought before Parliament till April, were preceded, not unreasonably, by the appointment of a Committee of the House of Commons to investigate the whole question of the con-

dition of those who depended on the land. And, as the discussion to which allusion has been made took place in the week after the formation of that committee, the speech which it elicited from the Prime Minister may fairly be looked on as an embodiment of the sentiments of the Administration on the subject, intended in some degree to aid and guide the deliberations of the members. In fact he began by explaining that, with a view both to express the sentiments of the Cabinet on the whole subject, and also to elicit the opinions of the Peers, "he should go a little more into detail than the immediate purpose of his motion might seem to require:" the motion with which he intended to conclude being merely a formal one for the production of returns and other papers, and the details into which he purposed to enter comprehending "a general view of the condition and resources of the country." If we remember that the speaker who was thus inviting a careful scrutiny of these subjects had himself, as Prime Minister, been for the last ten years chiefly responsible for them; that it was he himself who, more than any one else, was accountable for the condition of the country, whether good or bad; that it had been his duty to make the most of its resources; it is impossible to deny that he was in fact inviting a searching criticism upon the past career of his Administration, and that, as to its domestic policy, it must stand or fall by the verdict which his speech and the facts which it would establish would justify.

The first fact which he pressed upon his audience was the steady increase of the population since the commencement of the century. "It appeared that, notwithstanding the extensive and exhausting war on which the country was so long engaged, and notwithstanding also the waste of life which was necessarily incurred, the population increased rapidly during the struggle. At the beginning of the century the population of Great Britain was a fraction under eleven millions. During the next decade it increased rather more than a million and a half; and

from 1811 to 1821 nearly two millions. And this increase had preserved very nearly the same proportions in every district. It had been very nearly the same in England and in Wales, in the agricultural and manufacturing districts. The state of the public revenues was equally satisfactory. The revenue of the last year exceeded that of the preceding year by more than a million ; and there never had been any year's revenue collected with less of difficulty or of arrear. So that the revenue not only increased and continued to increase, but appeared to press more lightly on the people than at many former periods. A still more satisfactory and more irresistible proof of his assertion was supplied by the circumstance that the deposits in the savings' banks in 1821 nearly doubled the sums received by those establishments in 1820. The foreign commerce of the country too, was increasing greatly, and particularly in that which was the most valuable branch of it, the export of British produce and manufactures. And in consequence, (he could appeal to the testimony of both noble lords, who were connected with the manufacturing districts,) there was in almost all the important branches of our manufactures an evident improvement. He believed, with the exception of the iron trade, he might say in every branch.

"That a great pressure on the agricultural classes of the community had existed for a considerable time, and did still exist, he was not insensible. But a single fact would suffice to invalidate the opinion which had found its way into most of the petitions which had been presented on the subject, that the pressure on agriculture in this country was the result of excessive taxation, namely, that a similar pressure did at that time prevail in every other country. And this consideration had an important bearing on the whole question ; since it was impossible that there could be either dearth or superabundance in the other countries of Europe (whatever might be the character of our laws to regulate importation) without materially affect-



ing this country, and influencing both the degree of the evil, and the nature of the remedy which might be applicable to it. And, if it should be said, that in those other countries to which he alluded the taxation was likewise excessive, he would reply that in Switzerland taxes were almost unknown, there was no standing army, no national debt, and yet the distress among the agricultural classes in Switzerland was as great as in any other country of Europe. The fact was that at this moment superabundance, and the agricultural distress consequent upon it, were not confined to any one country."

It is here that Lord Liverpool's argument seems defective. The fact that an universal abundance of production should have caused universal distress to the producers in every country, whether taxed or untaxed, might indeed show that taxation was not the cause of that distress; but it was certainly calculated to raise a suspicion that there was something inherently vicious in the laws affecting the trade in corn everywhere. For, if that trade were not embarrassed with artificial and unnatural restrictions, it would obviously be impossible that fertility and plenty should not be the sources of wealth to the farmer, and that sterility and scarcity should not be the causes of distress to him. His first, it may be said his only object, is productiveness; and there must be a grave fault in a system of laws and regulations which makes the attainment of a trader's legitimate object ruinous instead of beneficial to him. But, as yet, the idea of a free trade in corn was one of which the bare possibility had so little occurred to any political economist in either party, that it was seen by no one that the condition of the agricultural interest, which Lord Liverpool affirmed to be similar everywhere, tended to recommend any change in more than a few details in the regulations affecting the importation of grain.

But on all other points Lord Liverpool's arguments were as convincing as the facts which he stated were

creditable to his administrative skill. He first touched on the complaints to which he had previously alluded, "of excessive taxation." "It had never occurred to those who made these complaints that since the close of the war a fourth of the whole taxation of the country had been remitted. And the reductions had been so arranged that the taxes which had been taken off were precisely those whose remission was calculated to operate the most directly on the relief of the country. A large portion of them consisted of the property tax. He did not mean to deny that the remission of indirect taxes might eventually yield as much relief to the country at large as the remission of direct taxes, but the effect in such cases was slow and uncertain; it was not felt in the quarter in which it was most wanted until a considerable time afterwards, sometimes not at all. On the other hand, when a direct tax was removed the amount went directly into the pockets of the people. He was aware that some had affirmed that the change which had taken place in the value of our currency had more than counterbalanced the relief afforded by the reduction of taxation. But this was a most extravagant and unfair exaggeration. It arose from those who so argued selecting a period when the depreciation was greatest, and reasoning on that as the average depreciation; while in fact, in 1819, at the time of the sitting of the Bank Committees, the depreciation, far from being 25 per cent., was not more than 4 per cent. But, even if their exaggerated estimate were the correct one, it would still be true, that the reduction of the taxation since the war, a reduction from seventy to fifty millions, outweighed any disadvantage which could possibly have resulted from a return to a metallic standard. But the House would be enabled to form a more correct judgment on the whole question of taxation if they looked at the condition of the country before the breaking out of the French war, and at the present time. Before 1792, the whole revenue of Great Britain was between sixteen and seventeen

millions : now it was fifty. But it was not denied that the wealth of the country had increased in as great, or a still greater proportion than the revenue ; a fact which showed that the chief evil of taxation, its tendency to retard the growth of the capital and resources of the nation, had not been operative in our case. There were documents of unquestionable accuracy, such as the returns of exports and imports, and similar papers, which proved what the real state of the country was thirty years ago, and which showed that a very large portion of the present wealth of the country had accumulated since that time, and was absolutely a new creation. Since that time our imports had more than doubled, our exports had more than trebled : while the other branches of our industry, inseparably connected with the prosperity of our commerce, had increased in at least an equal proportion ; not only keeping pace with the great augmentation of our population, but very far surpassing it. And that the agricultural wealth of the kingdom had had its fair share of the general amendment was demonstrated by the great quantity of land formerly waste which within the same period had been brought into cultivation, and by the greatly improved treatment, and consequent value, of those lands which were previously cultivated.

"The rise in the general prosperity was shown by the great recent increase in the consumption of excisable articles, of tea, soap, candles, leather, bricks, and other goods, though on every one of them the duty too had been greatly raised ; and, on the whole, he considered that the details which he had laid before the House proved that the circumstances of the agricultural interest, painful as they undoubtedly were, failed to establish any sufficient reason to call upon the Government for a further reduction of taxation, though he would not be understood to deny that measures of that character might be desirable on other grounds. What the agriculturist really wanted was a market ; but it was not in the power of Parliament



immediately to give him a market adequate to his wants. His market had been unavoidably narrowed by the great but necessary reduction which had taken place in the public expenditure. The effect of the expenditure during the war, especially during the last two or three years of it, was to create for the farmer an immense market for his produce. The cessation of the demand so created must necessarily be injurious to him. For the safety of the State, which could not long have supported such an unnatural outlay, the cessation was indispensable: but if it did not cause, it could not fail to increase, the distress of the farmer. But when some of those who put themselves forward as the patrons and champions of the farmer declared that the low prices from which he was now suffering benefited no other class, he met such a statement with an absolute denial, and affirmed that, though he sincerely wished that the distress did not exist, he could not be blind to the fact that the existing lowness of price did greatly benefit a vast majority of the people. It benefited the annuitant and the mortgagee, who were during the war the principal and almost the only sufferers. It had benefited the inhabitants of towns by the fall of poor rates which was among its immediate results. And from minute enquiry he could assert without fear of contradiction, that in London itself the lower orders had never been in a better condition than they were at that moment.

“ He looked upon it as the duty of the Government and of Parliament also to hold the balance between all the great interests of the country as evenly as possible. He had so much respect for agriculture, however, that he would say that if we could be justifiable in throwing the weight of a feather into one scale rather than into another, it should be thrown into that of the agricultural interest. At the same time it must be remembered that the agricultural was not the only interest in Great Britain. It was not even the most numerous interest. The various classes of consumers of agricultural produce formed a far more

numerous interest; and, so far as the distress of the farmer was caused by the lowness of the price of food, the consumers were benefited in a degree nearly equal to his suffering. Still he acknowledged that the exceeding depression of the farmer gave him a claim for some special assistance. Holding that opinion, the Government intended to propose a reduction in the malt tax, and were prepared to borrow a large sum (4,000,000*l.*) on Exchequer bills from the Bank in order to apply it in different ways to his relief. The principle of the intended measure had, he reminded the Peers, been recognised some years before when Exchequer bills to a still larger amount were issued for the relief of the manufacturing commercial classes. He did not imagine, indeed, that this, or any other single proposition, would immediately relieve the distress of the country. He did not expect that it would work wonders. But he trusted it might palliate evils which only natural causes and the operation of time could wholly remove. Some advantage he likewise anticipated from the modification of the principle on which the corn laws were founded. It had been felt by many persons who were well acquainted with the subject that the present system was defective in this respect; that until corn reached a certain price, eighty shillings a quarter, it gave a complete monopoly to the British grower; that, the moment that price was attained, it suddenly permitted the importation of foreign corn wholly free from any check or restraint: so that, instead of admitting a gradual supply proportionate to the public demand, the opening of the ports threw large masses of foreign corn at once into the market, and produced all the evils which might be supposed to arise from an abrupt transition from no importation to an unlimited supply. A gradual scale of duties, such as would prevent such sudden fluctuations, would, he thought, be an useful modification of the existing law. But neither from any alteration of the corn law could he encourage the farmer to look for any great and immediate relief. Real permanent relief must arise, and could



only arise, from a continuance and increase of the general prosperity of the country. Under a strong sense of that fact the Government was still pushing retrenchment further than any one had contemplated as advisable, or even practicable, in former years. The Finance Committee of the House of Commons which sat in 1817 had reported 17,350,000*l.* to be the amount of the expenditure below which it was not probable that the establishments of the country could be reduced. Yet the Administration had reduced them below that amount: and in the present year the estimates fell short of it by not less than 1,200,000*l.* They hoped, indeed, always to maintain the Sinking Fund, which, though established originally by Mr. Pitt, had been as warmly extolled by Mr. Fox and Mr. Sheridan as by its author and father. But while wishing, therefore, always to maintain such a surplus of the public revenue over the public expenditure as the Parliament in 1819 had recommended, he yet hoped to be able to accomplish further and important remissions of taxation through a reduction of the higher rates of interest on the national debt. They had begun to do so in one instance, that of the Navy 5 per cents.: by which they should effect a saving of 2,200,000*l.* a year; and hoped to be able to afford further relief in the same way in future years. They could reasonably look forward to a progressive rise in the funds, which would facilitate such operations; and with equal confidence they could look forward to a considerable improvement in the revenue as the result of the progress of our commerce and our manufactures. And it was to such steady and general progress and improvement that he also mainly looked for the relief of the agricultural class, and of any other interest which might be suffering under temporary depression."

That, while so great a war as that with Napoleon was still comparatively recent, and before prices had recovered their equilibrium, which had of necessity been greatly disturbed by the sudden re-establishment of peace and the financial measures with respect to the currency which were

its indispensable consequence, the Prime Minister should nevertheless have been able to point to such convincing evidences of general prosperity as were supplied by the increase of our population, by the more than proportionate increase of our home consumption, and by the growth of our trade of every kind, whether industrial or commercial, spoke volumes for the statesmanlike prudence and administrative skill which under his presidency had guided our councils: while the soundness of his calculations for the future was demonstrated by the events of the next two years, which were marked by almost unprecedented prosperity.

The session had been a prosperous one for the Ministry. And at its close the King was preparing to remove the jealousy with which the Scotch were regarding his Irish trip by a similar visit to Edinburgh, when a calamity of the most painful nature fell upon the Government and the whole nation. During the latter part of the session Lord Londonderry had shown signs of having been overworked that had at times caused considerable alarm to his friends. Not only had he had the affairs of his own office, which, through the folly of the Continental sovereigns, were becoming more intricate and perplexing than ever, on his shoulders, but, as leader of the Government in the House of Commons, he had also to bring before it the greater part of the financial measures to which allusion has been made. It is remarkable that both he and Canning had at different times been mentioned as probable Chancellors of the Exchequer, and more than one of his speeches during this session showed that he would have been fully competent to discharge the duties of that most onerous office at the most urgent crisis. Parliament did not rise till the first week in August; but even then he could be allowed no relaxation. For more than two years Spain and Italy had been agitated by wild schemes of revolution, which had given rise to a congress held at Troppau, which, in the autumn of 1821, was afterwards transferred to Laybach in Styria.

Our share in it had been limited, allowing Sir C. Stuart, our ambassador to the Austrian court, to be present rather to watch than to take part in the deliberations. As on another occasion Lord Liverpool wrote to Canning, he disliked the system of congresses; feeling sure that such an assemblage, "without a clear necessity and a definite object, would always breed mischief." And, as far as we were concerned, this congress only served to show the continued adhesion of our Cabinet to the views which Lord Londonderry had from the first taken of the Holy Alliance. The confederates united by that well-known treaty resolved to aid the King of Naples by a military force: and Lord Londonderry sent instructions to our ambassador to give no countenance to such a course, as being one "diametrically opposed to the fundamental laws of Great Britain." As might have been expected, the army of the Holy Allies had little difficulty in putting down the revolutionary party at Naples. But their success in this enterprise only sowed the seeds of fresh difficulties. The overthrow of the Neapolitan revolutionists exasperated their Spanish confederates, and stimulated them to bolder action. Insurrection broke out from one end of the country to the other; and Louis XVIII., who looked on the Spanish king as his cousin, openly avowed his intention of interfering to support him by force of arms. Before any irrevocable step should be taken in that direction, it was agreed that the plenipotentiaries of the different Powers should meet in a fresh congress at Vienna, with the intention that, after some preliminary discussions, it should transfer its sittings to Verona; and it was so important to the peace of Europe to prevent any steps from being taken that might rekindle the flames of war throughout Europe, that the Cabinet decided that the emergency required the presence of Lord Londonderry himself. Accordingly, as soon as Parliament was prorogued, he began to make his preparations for departure. But, before he could set out, his mind gave way. He fell into a state of nervous agitation that alarmed every



one that had business to transact with him.<sup>1</sup> The prorogation had taken place on the 6th of August. On the 9th both the King and the Duke of Wellington saw so visible a change in his manner that they both expressed their anxiety that he should have medical advice. His physician at once pronounced him in a high fever, and perceived also signs of incoherence and delirium which were calculated to cause even greater anxiety. He tried remedies, severe cupping and medicine, which seemed to relieve the body, but not to restore the mind; he watched him; but the most anxious vigilance, unless restraint can be employed, is likely to be eluded. And on the morning of the 12th, almost before the physician was awake, the patient plunged a small penknife into his throat, with such fatal force and accuracy that his death was nearly instantaneous.

It was a heavy loss to the Cabinet, though there was still within reach a man so conspicuously fit to succeed him, and so fully sharing his views on foreign politics, that it could not be deemed irreparable, if the objection could be got over which, in spite of the conditional consent that he had once given, there was little doubt the King would still urge to his readmission to his service at home. His Majesty had sailed for Scotland on the 10th, and was at anchor in Leith Roads when the intelligence reached Mr. Peel, who was in attendance on him. The Secretary "broke it to him as cautiously as possible;" but, as he wrote to Lord Liverpool, "his Majesty seemed almost prepared for it from what had passed between him and Lord Londonderry the week before. He spoke of him in the warmest terms of affection and admiration, and utterly lamented his loss." And one of his first acts showed the two ministers how great would be the difficulty of obtaining his consent to replace their lost colleague by Canning,

<sup>1</sup> The examination of many of his letters for the present work, supplied the author with an incidental proof of the extent to which Lord Londonderry's labours were affecting his strength. Throughout June and July his handwriting is almost illegible.



though generally recognised as the only man fit for the office. Lord Liverpool was probably not sorry that the occupations of a different kind to which his Majesty was pledged for the next week or two would give him time gradually to accustom his mind to the contemplation of what he himself must have seen to be so desirable as to be almost unavoidable; and, therefore, in his first communication proposed to postpone all discussions on the subject till the King should return to London. The King's reply approved the delay. But a couple of days afterwards he followed up his first letter by a second, showing a curious desire to elude the proposal which he foresaw must be made to him by getting Canning, if possible, out of the way before it could be mentioned.

*Private.*

Royal George Yacht, Leith Roads,  
August 15th, 1822.

DEAR LORD LIVERPOOL,

I cannot express the painful grief which I feel at your melancholy communication; melancholy indeed, both for myself and others who knew the inestimable value of this superior and excellent person.

The ways of Providence are so inscrutable to us poor blind creatures that, on occasions of this description, the agony of one's mind is lost in amazement. You, my Lord, will not be surprised that I should feel this. I think you have judged rightly in not coming, and I quite approve that no arrangements should be thought of till my return to town.

Your sincere friend,  
GEORGE R.

*P.S.* I write one word more, to desire that you will favour no intentions respecting the blue ribbon.

*Most private.*

Dalkeith Palace, August 17th, 1822.

DEAR LORD LIVERPOOL,

Notwithstanding the hurry and agitated confusion in which I am necessarily kept, yet, as you may suppose, I cannot help considering very deeply the distress and embarrassment in which my Government must be placed by the death of my esteemed and valued friend Lord Londonderry.

The immediate object of my writing to you this letter is not to make any proposal at present with a view of supplying the lamentable void produced by the untimely death of this excellent statesman, but to desire that you will not interrupt, and on no account impede the arrangements which are already settled respecting India, as it is my decision that they should remain final and unalterable.

I am induced to say thus much to you for the purpose of guarding you against any new negotiation with the individual in question.

Believe me, your sincere friend always,

G. R.

The King even canvassed the minister whom he had with him, on the subject, trying to win his concurrence in the line which he had decided on endeavouring to adopt: not perhaps without some hope that the promptings of personal ambition might induce Peel to favour it; since there was already a party among the Anti-Catholics, as those who opposed Emancipation were generally called, who were endeavouring to represent Peel, whom they looked on as their champion in the House of Commons, as on that ground more fitted for the lead which was vacated by Lord Londonderry's death. Peel, however, who felt the acquisition of Canning to the Cabinet to be indispensable, was too prudent to encourage any attempt as yet to put him in a position of rivalry to one who had in every respect superior claims to the lead, and who, there could be no question, would refuse office without it; and contented himself with giving a cautiously guarded reply to His Majesty, but reported what had passed without delay to Lord Liverpool.

*Most private.*

Edinburgh, August 20th, 1822.

DEAR LORD LIVERPOOL,

I think it right, at least it will be a satisfaction to my mind, to mention to you something which passed with the King yesterday.

On going into the closet to him before the addresses were presented, he said to me, "I will now tell you what I purposely postponed telling you until forty-eight hours after I had done

it, that I have written to Lord Liverpool informing him that it is my decided intention that all the arrangements with respect to India should remain as they were settled before Lord Londonderry's death, and that there should be no delay in completing them." The King added, "I hope you think I have done right." I replied that I was sensible of his kindness in not having previously mentioned his intention to write to you, and that I hoped he would excuse me if I declined giving any opinion upon the subject of his letter to you, or saying a word upon any point connected with it.

Believe me, dear Lord Liverpool,

Yours most truly,

ROBERT PEEL.

There was, however, another party, headed by Lord Clancarty (who, from his great experience as a diplomatist, was not unlikely to obtain a deferential hearing for his opinion on such a subject), which was anxious to see the Duke of Wellington removed to the Foreign Office. And this was a choice which it would certainly have been easy to induce the King to adopt, if he had not already secretly conceived the idea. For one point could not be left unsettled till his return. It had been necessary at once to determine who should be our plenipotentiary at Vienna; and Lord Liverpool had written to the King to recommend the substitution of the Duke for Lord Londonderry, with the alternative of Lord Clancarty himself if the Duke should decline the mission. The King in reply warmly approved of the proposal, and, as the Duke cheerfully undertook the duty, it was not difficult to argue plausibly, in favour of one, who thus replaced the deceased minister in a portion of his duties, being selected as his successor in all. But Lord Liverpool was by no means inclined to make the temporary employment a stepping-stone to the permanent office. Among his eminent qualifications for his own post was an estimate of other men's abilities and characters, and also of their views, which seldom deceived him; combined with a keen-

and true judgment of what would most strengthen the Administration. And a letter which the next week he wrote to the first Lord of the Admiralty displays all these qualities: his distrust of the Duke's fitness for the Foreign Office; his suspicion that on this point the Duke himself would fully agree with him; and (though, for reasons which he explains, he forbears to dilate upon it,) his resolution not to yield the point of the appointment of Canning to the vacant Secretaryship.

August 25th, 1822.

MY DEAR MELVILLE,

I have this moment received your letter; I can assure you that I felt the greatest reluctance in pressing you to come to town, but on the other hand it must, I should think, be obvious that the existence of the Government must depend upon the five or six days' deliberation after the King's arrival in London.

I have assured his Majesty that I would neither do nor say anything to commit myself as to eventual arrangements until after I had seen him: but observe where we are; Londonderry's sad death strikes off from us the right arm of the Administration. I believe the reasonable part of the world would be of opinion that the Duke of Wellington would be the most proper person to replace him in the special mission to Vienna, but, as to his being at the head of the Foreign Office, I do not think that anything would be more inexpedient, for the sake of the Duke of Wellington and of his public utility, than to put him permanently into any political office. I doubt whether he would accept any such office temporarily, and if he did, I am confident that a temporary appointment out of the usual course would be a mark of extreme weakness in the Government, and could only be justified by a most substantial arrangement succeeding to it.

I purposely avoid saying one word about Canning in this letter, because I have declined saying anything about him to any person who has written to me, and have answered that nothing could be discussed till the return of the King. It must be evident, however, that all must be then discussed. Londonderry's death is a crisis in the Government, and whether with



more or with fewer changes the Administration will be considered as new cast.

Can I therefore, under such circumstances, do otherwise than press you to return to London? None of the matters growing out of the late sad calamity will admit of delay.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

In the preference for Canning intimated in the closing paragraph of the letter, Lord Melville himself was far from concurring. The letter itself was a reply to one from him, in which he had excused himself from returning to London if the Prime Minister could dispense with his attendance; but at the same time had declared his feeling to be in favour of requesting the Duke to take the Foreign Office. "Even if Lord Liverpool should contemplate inviting Canning to renounce his Indian appointment, and it should be thought right that an endeavour should be made to induce the King to consent to it, he did not think that in the end it would accomplish the object which they must all have in view, as to carrying on the public business in the House of Commons." The writer, however, added, "that he would not oppose such a proposition if others deemed it on the whole most desirable." The Chancellor, too, avowed the greatest repugnance to a reunion with Canning, writing Lord Liverpool a long letter in which he not obscurely intimated that he contemplated retiring if such a step was resolved on: though he would not refuse to delay his resignation till he could no longer be supposed to have been influenced by it. Indeed among all his colleagues Lord Liverpool had but one who was thoroughly convinced of the necessity of retaining Canning in England, and he was the very man whom so many desired to see supplant him, the Duke of Wellington himself. The King returned to London on the 1st of September, and not till then did Lord Liverpool consider himself at liberty to bring the question to whom the vacant office should be

offered before the Cabinet. He had, however, no difficulty in procuring their acquiescence in the course on which he himself had resolved, and their sanction to the representation which he laid before the King that it was their unanimous opinion that Canning was the fittest person to receive the offer. During the next few days both he and the Duke had more than one interview with his Majesty. And they had a secret coadjutor in the Marchioness of Conyngham, a lady who was generally supposed to have only too much influence at Carlton House, and who, before the King's return from Scotland, sent a significant message to Lord Liverpool that his Majesty's objections to Canning would probably not be found insuperable. And at last, after a deliberation protracted long enough to show the extreme reluctance with which he consented to forget the occurrences of the last two years, George IV. yielded ; doing at last what he saw must be done with a good grace and with dignity. The short letters which are here subjoined will show how the matter was finally brought to the desired conclusion :

*Private.*

Carlton House, September 8th, 1822.

DEAR LORD LIVERPOOL,

I send you the enclosed note ; by this you will see that I have sacrificed my private feelings, as you and other members of the Cabinet have represented to me that it is what you consider to be for the good of the public service. I have on every occasion, as in this instance, shown my regard and sincerity towards my Government, and I therefore look with confidence to a similar return. This is the greatest sacrifice of my opinions and feelings that I have ever made in my life.

Believe me, your sincere friend,

G. R.

Carlton House, September 8th, 1822.

The King has given the fullest consideration to the proposition submitted by Lord Liverpool relative to the admission of Mr. Canning into the King's Government.

The King has always been justly impressed with the value of Mr. Canning's talents, and the King had taught himself to believe that such talents might, and ought to have been exercised for the benefit of his sovereign and his country.

When Mr. Canning thought proper to tender his resignation to the King, and to retire from the King's councils, the King expressed to Mr. Canning his regret that the country was to be deprived of his services.

It was at this period of time that the King had reason to view with surprise the line of conduct which Mr. Canning then, and afterwards, thought proper to adopt.

The King forbears to enter into details ; the King is aware that the brightest ornament of his crown is the power of extending grace and favour to a subject who may have incurred his displeasure.

The King therefore permits Lord Liverpool to propose Mr. Canning's readmission into the Government, and the King desires that the communication may be made to Mr. Canning by the transmission of this note.

G. R.

*Private.*

Coombe Wood, September 8th, 1822.

Lord Liverpool has this moment had the honour of receiving your Majesty's letter, and he feels himself quite overcome with the generosity and goodness manifested by your Majesty, in the sacrifice which your Majesty has condescended to make of your personal feelings, to the consideration of what has been humbly represented to your Majesty by so many of your confidential servants, as the advantage of the public service.

Your Majesty may most fully rely upon the deep impression which this act of confidence and kindness of your Majesty cannot fail to make upon the mind of Lord Liverpool, and of all those with whom your Majesty has been graciously pleased to communicate upon this most trying occasion.

Lord Liverpool will, in obedience to your Majesty's commands, communicate to Mr. Canning your Majesty's letter, by which your Majesty has been graciously pleased to consent to his admission into your Majesty's service.

Fife House, September 11th, 1822.

MY DEAR CANNING,

Having explained to you the nature of the arrangement which I had humbly submitted to his Majesty for filling up the vacancy which had occurred in his Government by the melancholy death of Lord Londonderry, I am bound, as you will see, by the terms of the enclosed letter which I had the honour of receiving from his Majesty, to transmit it to you for your perusal before I receive your answer.

In transmitting it, however, I cannot refrain from declaring to you my strong impression, that after the severe calamity which the King and the country have sustained, and under all the circumstances of the present crisis, a sense of public duty must preclude you from making any difficulty as to taking your part in the councils of the King's Government at home at this time.

I know enough of his Majesty's disposition and magnanimity to be quite satisfied that, however his feelings may have been wounded by some past occurrences, the causes of which have now gone by, he would never have consented to admit you, or any one, into his councils, unless he had determined to afford to the individual the fullest confidence that might be necessary for the discharge of the important duties of the high and arduous situation which he might be called upon to fill.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

Gloucester Lodge, September 13th, 1822.

Mr. Canning apprehends that it might be considered as disrespectful to the King to omit taking notice of the letter from his Majesty to Lord Liverpool, which Lord Liverpool was specially directed to transmit to Mr. Canning.

Mr. Canning therefore acknowledges, with all thankfulness and humility, the King's spontaneous signification of his Majesty's "grace and favour," and he is particularly grateful for his Majesty's great condescension in specifying the precise period of time at which Mr. Canning had the misfortune to "incur his Majesty's displeasure," as he is confident that, if he were not restrained by his Majesty's declared wish from entering



into details, he could make it clear that in the transactions of that period he had not the remotest intention of giving any offence to his Majesty.

Mr. Canning has only further to express his humble acknowledgments to his Majesty for the confidence so generously manifested by his Majesty in the very nature of the proposal which his Majesty has authorised Lord Liverpool to make to him ; a confidence which it will be Mr. Canning's earnest and constant endeavour to deserve.

It was not altogether without an internal struggle that Canning brought himself to write the last of these letters. Though at first he certainly only accepted India from a despair of being restored to the King's councils at home, familiarity with the idea had more than reconciled him to it, it had attached him to it ; and it seems probable that the entreaties of his family were needed to induce him to resign it, and with it the prospect which perhaps in his honest and ever active ambition he had begun to picture to himself, of terminating the wars which had been for many years the chief feature of our government in the East ; of availing himself of the re-establishment of peace to diffuse its blessings among not only our own settlers but the natives also, by that improvement of the details of administration ; that removal of abuses which, though abated, were far from being yet extinguished ; that extension of the industrial resources of the country and encouragement of its commerce, for which, though manifestly both desirable and practicable, no governor could find time while his attention was engrossed by the daily demands of war ; and of winning at the same time the admiration of his countrymen at home, the gratitude and affection of those in India, perhaps even of rivalling the glory of Hastings himself, in what had since his time become a far wider and more laborious sphere of action.

The filling up of the post which Canning's return to the Cabinet left vacant was not altogether unattended with embarrassment. The splendour of the appointment, both

in its power and emoluments, was sufficient wholly to blind the judgment of many, who were covetous, or ambitious, or both, to their incapacity for fulfilling its duties, to every consideration indeed but the desire of obtaining it; and accordingly solicitations now poured in upon the minister from persons who had never shown the slightest ability to warrant such a claim, and in more than one instance from persons who in previous appointments had shown so utter a want of capacity as would have made it scandalous to invest them with such power of doing mischief. Lord Liverpool must have been beginning to doubt whether he had not bought the allegiance of the Grenville connection at too high a price, for Mr. Wynne had proved most inefficient at the Board of Control, and yet fancied that the desire of the East India directors to get rid of him would lead them to acquiesce in such a promotion for him. What was even more extraordinary was that his kinsman and patron the Duke of Buckingham, who had no official experience whatever, and whose habits and even personal appearance were absolutely inconsistent with energy or activity of any kind, coveted the same post, and pressed earnestly to be allowed to exchange the luxuries of Stowe for the viceregal pomp and titles of Bengal. The claims of a third were still more preposterous. Lord William Bentinck had been Governor of Madras, and had been deservedly removed when his mismanagement had contributed to bring on the terrible mutiny at Vellore. Family interest had subsequently obtained for him the government of Sicily, where his mingled rashness and fickleness had been almost equally mischievous, and on more than one occasion had seriously impeded Wellington's operations in the Peninsula. He had of late years been busily intriguing with the Court of Directors, and now, though in constant opposition to the Government, had the hardihood to write a long letter to Lord Liverpool to request the government of the whole country to the administration of a single province of which he had been found unequal. In later and worse

days he obtained his wish, and India had deep cause to regret its fulfilment, since it was mainly to his unstatesman-like retrenchments of our military force that the terrible disasters of Affghanistan were owing, which cost us one gallant army; seriously damaged our reputation; and shook the whole fabric of our authority in the East to its foundations.

Lord Liverpool would apparently have preferred entrusting India to Lord Melville, but that minister declined it. He next turned his eyes to the Speaker of the House of Commons, Mr. Manners Sutton, son of the Archbishop of Canterbury, who was not without talents for administration, had a sound knowledge of constitutional law, and was eminently distinguished for tact and suavity of manners; and, if Mr. Wynne would have consented to exchange the Board of Control for the chair of the House of Commons, for which he had competed unsuccessfully when Mr. Sutton was elected, that inducement would probably have been decisive in favour of Mr. Sutton; while to secure it Lord Liverpool would even have been willing also to admit the Duke of Buckingham into the Cabinet without office. He laid his views on the whole question before the King; and the King's replies to his letters show how calmly and judiciously George IV. could at times apply himself to the consideration of matters of business:

Fife House, October 7th, 1822.

Lord Liverpool has the honour to inform your Majesty that considerable difficulties appear likely to arise in filling up the situation of Governor-General of India.

A very powerful party in the Court of Directors are anxious to bring forward Lord William Bentinck for this purpose; but Lord Liverpool feels very strongly that, after the part taken by Lord William Bentinck in Parliament in opposition to your Majesty's Government, his appointment to such a station (particularly as he would not consider it himself in any way as owing to the good-will of your Majesty or your Government) would be in the highest degree humiliating to your Majesty's Government, and might be productive of the very worst effects.

Lord Liverpool has reason to believe that, upon the recommendation of your Majesty's Government, the Court of Directors might be disposed to acquiesce in the appointment of the Speaker, provided that appointment would lead to Mr. Wynne succeeding to the chair, and to some other person being placed, in consequence, at the head of the Board of Control; but Lord Liverpool knows that the Duke of Buckingham considers Mr. Wynne's station in the Cabinet as a necessary link of connection between his family and friends and the Government; and he would not allow Mr. Wynne to relinquish it unless he (the Duke of Buckingham) was himself called to the Cabinet.

There are considerations with which Lord Liverpool will not trouble your Majesty at present, why it never would answer to put the Duke of Buckingham at the head of the Board of Control. Under these circumstances Lord Liverpool most humbly requests to know from your Majesty, whether your Majesty would have any objection, upon Mr. Wynne being elected Speaker of the House of Commons, to the Duke of Buckingham being called to the Cabinet without office. Lord Liverpool would not, on any account, make any intimation of this description without first ascertaining your Majesty's feelings upon it; nor has he any desire to press it upon your Majesty, if your Majesty has any very strong objections against it; but if your Majesty should be graciously pleased to sanction this expedient, Lord Liverpool thinks it may be the means of materially strengthening and consolidating your Majesty's Government at the opening of the next session of Parliament. Lord Liverpool begs to add, by way of explanation, that the Duke of Buckingham would not, according to this suggestion, be called to the Cabinet until after the Speaker's appointment had taken place, and after Mr. Wynne had actually succeeded to the Chair.

*Private.*

Keeper's Lodge, Windsor Park,  
October 8th, 1822.

DEAR LORD LIVERPOOL,

I coincide completely with you in the opinion that it would be highly inadvisable that Lord William Bentinck should be the successor of the Marquis of Hastings.



With respect to the other suggestions you have offered me for my consideration, I must fairly acknowledge to you that I think they are all attended with more or less difficulty, and any one of them in the abstract likely, if not certain, of being followed by serious inconvenience in the result.

I can have no hesitation in stating as my opinion, that the present Speaker would be a very proper person to go to India. As to Mr. Wynne, if he is deemed the properest person to fill the vacancy in the chair of the House of Commons, and supposing him to attain it, I am decidedly of opinion that he and all his connections (taking into view the two very highest and most marked favours which I have conferred within the short space of two years upon the Duke of Buckingham<sup>1</sup>) ought to be content ; and that if they are not so in consequence, nothing that ever I can do, or my Government ever can or may do, will satisfy their immeasurable pretensions.

With regard to the admission of the Duke of Buckingham into the Cabinet, I am certain that, independent of any other objection to which it is so palpably open, it would be one of the most unpopular measures that the Government could have recourse to ; and here I must candidly state to you an opinion which I have long entertained, that my Cabinet (from a variety of circumstances) has become by far too numerous ; and at the same time that I do admit, that in the present instance (were it to take place) this would not be increasing the number of those who compose the Cabinet at present, still I think that you ought well to consider, upon any vacancy occurring in several of those offices which have lately been made Cabinet situations, before you suffer them to be filled up with the like important trust being attached to them.

Your sincere friend,

G. R.

Fife House, October 9th, 1822.

Lord Liverpool begs to be allowed to return your Majesty his most grateful thanks for your Majesty's gracious letter, and to assure you that he will not press further the proposal which he took the liberty of bringing under your Majesty's consideration, respecting the Duke of Buckingham.

<sup>1</sup> The Dukedom and the Garter.

Lord Liverpool takes the liberty, however, of observing, that under these circumstances there does not appear to be any adequate object in proposing the Speaker for the Government of India, as Mr. Wynne will not accept the chair of the House of Commons unless the Duke of Buckingham could be in the Cabinet; and as your Majesty's Government would only therefore be embarrassed in selecting a proper person for the situation of Speaker in the House of Commons.

Lord Liverpool must further observe, that the friends of Government in the East India Direction decidedly prefer Lord Amherst to the Speaker for the Government of India, unless the Speaker's appointment had led to a change in the Board of Control; and in order to obviate the inconveniences which might arise from Lord William Bentinck being brought forward, Lord Liverpool requests your Majesty's permission to inform the chairman of the East India Company, that if Lord Amherst should be nominated by them as Governor-General, your Majesty will not disapprove of the appointment.

Your Majesty is no doubt aware that the nomination is by law in the court of Directors, and that the Crown has only a negative, to the exercise of which it would of course be very disagreeable to be driven.

*Private.*

Royal Lodge, Windsor Park,

October 9th, 1822.

DEAR LORD LIVERPOOL,

I hope you will find that I have not delayed the return of the messenger very long.

I shall certainly not object to the nomination of Lord Amherst to the station of Governor-General in India, if he be the individual that is the most desired by the Board of Directors; at the same time you cannot but be sensible, that for many reasons he could have no pretensions, and indeed in no way could he be the object of my own selection.

Your sincere friend,

G. R.

Before, however, Lord Liverpool met Parliament again he had succeeded in making further alterations in the com-

position of his Ministry, which added more to its strength than the acquisition of Mr. Wynne. The nature of them will be best gathered from another portion of the correspondence of the minister, principally with his royal master. The first letter is chiefly important as a conclusive refutation of the charge that has been made against Lord Liverpool of having behaved with discourtesy to a colleague to whom he was sincerely attached.<sup>1</sup> Nor ought it to be left unnoticed how gracefully the King himself, while retaining his objections to a numerous Cabinet, expressed his willingness to defer on that point to his minister's judgment.

*Most private and confidential.*

Coombe Wood, December 14th, 1822.

MY DEAR VANSITTART,

I think it right to apprise you that our friend Bathurst, partly on account of the state of his health, and his experience that a continued residence in London does not agree with him, and partly from family considerations, has determined to resign his office of the Duchy, and to retire from Parliament upon the opening of the session.

This intention is at present not known to more than three or four persons, and it is very desirable on many accounts that it should not transpire for some time. I have been obliged, however, to consider in what manner the office of Chancellor of the Duchy (in many respects the most desirable office within the patronage of the Crown) could be disposed of with the greatest advantage to the King's service; and in consequence of what passed between you and me two years ago, I am desirous of knowing whether you would have any objection to take it. The arrange-

<sup>1</sup> Even a man so generally well-informed on all that was passing as Lord Colchester says (Diary, February 5th, 1823, iii. 272): "N.B. Lord Liverpool's letter to his colleague of ten years, Vansittart, notifying his removal, was not even written in his own hand, but by that of his private secretary, Brookbank." But this is a mistake, for the letter alluded to, which is given above, is in Lord Liverpool's own handwriting, as are all the others which followed on the same subject.

ment which, in such case, I should submit to the King, would be to make Robinson Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Huskisson President of the Board of Trade. You are probably aware that our poor friend Londonderry was most anxious that some means should be found of placing Huskisson (from whom he derived so much assistance) in a more prominent situation in the Government than that which he had held for so many years, before the next session ; and this suggestion would have the double effect of attaining this object, and, at the same time, promoting Robinson, about whom Londonderry was known to be personally as well as politically interested.

Neither Robinson nor Huskisson have the most remote idea either of Bathurst's resignation, or of any intention which we may have in consequence of it.

In addition to the above considerations, the promotion of Huskisson would enable me to give his office to Arbuthnot, who has been nearly fourteen years Secretary of the Treasury, and is almost worn out by the drudgery attendant upon the duties of that office in the House of Commons. The office of Woods and Forests might keep him in confidential communication with the Government, which is a great object to me, and at the same time relieve him from the severest part of the fatigue under which he now labours.

I would not, I can assure you, bring this proposal even under your consideration if there was anything in the existing state of our finances, or of the business of the Treasury, which could make it awkward or ambiguous in the eyes of the world. We have gone on so cordially and satisfactorily for more than ten years, that, as far as I am personally concerned, I can wish for no change. My own career in public life will not probably be of much longer duration, and we must all look forward. I cannot therefore let the present opportunity pass by without putting a situation within your reach, highly honorable in itself, and which may save you from some of those eventual embarrassments which nearly always grow out of so great a change in the Government as has unavoidably arisen in consequence of the death of our poor friend Londonderry.

You will of course understand that my motive was your retaining your seat in the Cabinet. I can have no objection to your



communicating confidentially with Lord Sidmouth, before you see me upon the subject.

Believe me to be, my dear Vansittart,

Yours very faithfully and sincerely,

LIVERPOOL.

December, 1822.

Lord Liverpool has the honour to inform your Majesty that he has had an intimation from Mr. Bathurst that, in consequence of the state of his health, and of his having found that it has been lately seriously affected by a continued residence in London, and attendance in the House of Commons, he is desirous of laying at your Majesty's feet his office of Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and of retiring from Parliament before the opening of the next session.

Lord Liverpool has anxiously considered what arrangement would be most advantageous, under all the present circumstances, for your Majesty's service in consequence of this vacancy, and he ventures most humbly to propose to your Majesty that Mr. Vansittart, who has been more than ten years Chancellor of the Exchequer, should succeed Mr. Bathurst as Chancellor of the Duchy, and that Mr. Robinson should succeed Mr. Vansittart as Chancellor of the Exchequer.

If your Majesty shall be graciously pleased to approve of this part of the arrangement, Lord Liverpool can have no doubt that Mr. Huskisson is the person best qualified to succeed Mr. Robinson as President of the Board of Trade, and Treasurer of the Navy.

Lord Liverpool is bound, however, to state that he has reason to believe that Mr. Huskisson entertains expectations that, in the event of his succeeding to this office, he may be admitted by your Majesty to be one of your Majesty's confidential servants.<sup>1</sup>

After the communication which Lord Liverpool had the honour to receive from your Majesty some weeks ago, in which your Majesty was pleased to express your sentiments upon the numbers of your Cabinet, and your desire that those numbers

<sup>1</sup> By a seat in the Cabinet.

might, as opportunities occurred, be reduced, Lord Liverpool feels it to be quite impossible for him to press the introduction of Mr. Huskisson into the Cabinet ; but as it is possible, particularly as the Presidency of the Board of Trade is not an office to which this distinction is necessarily attached, that Mr. Huskisson's acceptance of the official promotion may depend upon this circumstance, Lord Liverpool did not feel that he should discharge his duty to your Majesty if he did not bring it before your Majesty for your consideration, and at the same time leave it entirely to your Majesty's decision.

*Private.*

Pavilion, Brighton, January 2d, 1823.

MY DEAR LIVERPOOL,

I have great pleasure in acquiescing in your proposal respecting Mr. Vansittart, and in whatever way it may be agreeable to him to be raised to the peerage I am most ready to assent to it. I beg you will have the goodness to acquaint him that I am fully sensible of the value of his past services, and the high estimation in which I hold his private character.

I think your selection of Mr. Robinson as Mr. Vansittart's successor well judged, and one very likely to give great satisfaction to the country gentlemen.

I hope Mr. Robinson will feel the tribute of affection and regard that has been paid to the memory of his and our friend poor Lord Londonderry by your selection.

To Mr. Huskisson's appointment I have no objection ; I think that you are quite right in abridging the number in your Cabinet ; but I leave it entirely to your decision if you should think the admission of Mr. Huskisson into the Cabinet for the good of the public service not to hesitate to do so, but upon this I rely with great confidence on your honest and prudent judgment. Who is to succeed Mr. Huskisson ? for that you have not mentioned. I beg to offer you and Lady Liverpool<sup>1</sup> the compliments of the season.

Believe me, with great regard,

Your sincere friend,

G. R.

<sup>1</sup> In the preceding autumn Lord Liverpool had married Miss Chester, daughter of Charles Chester, Esq. and niece of the first Lord Bagot.

Fife House, January 6th, 1823.

Lord Liverpool has the honour to acquaint your Majesty that, through the intervention of Mr. Canning, Mr. Huskisson has been induced not to press at this time the object for which he was so particularly solicitous, that of being admitted to be one of your Majesty's confidential servants. But as your Majesty has been graciously pleased in a manner so gratifying to Lord Liverpool to place this question within his discretion, Lord Liverpool has ventured to assure Mr. Huskisson that your Majesty will have no objection to authorise the admission of Mr. Huskisson into the Cabinet after he shall have held the presidency of the Board of Trade for a twelvemonth, or sooner, if from any circumstances the present number of the Cabinet shall be reduced.

Lord Liverpool has been led to say this much in consequence of having ascertained that the late Lord Londonderry (to whom Mr. Huskisson was particularly serviceable in all financial and commercial debates in the House of Commons) had held out expectations that at no remote period he would be proposed to your Majesty as a member of your Majesty's Cabinet; and because likewise Mr. Huskisson may be naturally supposed to experience some disappointment at the promotion of Mr. Robinson to be Chancellor of the Exchequer, which office, if it had been conferred upon Mr. Huskisson, would have secured to him that object.

At the beginning of 1822 Mr. Huskisson had represented to Lord Liverpool the comparative unimportance of the office which he filled as Chief Commissioner of the Woods and Forests, and had announced his resolution to retain it but a short time longer, urging on him at the same time his claim to a more influential post, in terms which plainly pointed to that which was now offered to him. Lord Liverpool had been most anxious to gratify him, and to make a vacancy for him had proposed to Lord Palmerston to exchange the office which he held for a seat in the House of Peers. But his proposal was not willingly received, and

Lord Liverpool prevailed on Huskisson to remain where he was, and to content himself with the knowledge of the minister's anxiety to promote him on the first opportunity. The desired opportunity was now found. But as Mr. Robinson, whom Huskisson was to succeed, had been in the Cabinet, it was only through the earnest intervention of Canning that he was induced to forego for a time his pretensions to similar dignity, and to consider the promise of eventual admission a recognition of his claims sufficient to satisfy his self-respect; but, when this point was thus happily settled, his thorough acquaintance with the subjects which came under his regulation, and indeed with the whole commercial and financial interests of the kingdom, proved of the greatest service to the Ministry.

These arrangements, however, if contemplated, had as yet been revealed to no one when Lord Liverpool began to prepare his measures for the ensuing session; and in a letter which he wrote to Mr. Peel he gives an intimation of what points he considers of the greatest importance: questions relating to Ireland belonging, as well as those of domestic policy in England, to Peel's office, and being also matters in which he was the more anxious for Peel's opinion, from the peculiar familiarity which that minister's long discharge of the duties of Irish Secretary had necessarily given him.

Fife House, October 9th, 1822.

MY DEAR PEEL,

I hope to be able to get out of town on the 10th or 11th, as I feel very much the want of a little rest, which can only be had at some distance from London.

I intend, however, to return from Walmer about the 15th of November, and Canning and I have agreed that it will be very desirable to have a general meeting of the members of the Government in town in the course of the third week in November. We all must be sensible of the great disadvantage which accrues from postponing the consideration of subjects which are likely to be brought forward in Parliament to the



time of its actual sitting, or even to a short period antecedent to it.

By the end of November we shall be apprised of all that has passed at Vienna or Verona, and be prepared in consequence to take our decision upon any points of difficulty connected with our foreign relations ; but there are many domestic questions of considerable importance which I should think it very desirable to consider at the same time, particularly those which relate to Ireland.

The question of the magistracy is, I think, now put in a proper course, and I only hope the Irish Government will not sleep upon it.

The revenue question, in which Ireland is plainly concerned, shall likewise be duly considered ; but there remains a third question to which I am most anxious to call the attention of all those who are concerned with the Irish Government.

You will understand that I allude to that of tithes.

I think it will be quite impossible not to do something more effectual on this subject than what was intended to be done by the bill of last session. I should very much regret that so delicate a question should be thrown loose on a Committee of the House of Commons, composed as it would be in a large proportion of members who, if not hostile to the Establishment itself, would certainly be ready to sacrifice its interests to their own.

I wish, therefore, you would draw the serious attention of the Irish Government to this whole subject ; that you will make them feel how important it is that it should be kept in the hands of the Government ; and that in this view and for this purpose they should be prepared with some plan for consideration, if possible, by the period to which I have alluded.

You will best judge whether you can most advantageously write on this matter to the Lord Lieutenant or to Goulburn. I should incline to recommend a letter to both, as I think it will manifest to the Lord Lieutenant that we are really in earnest upon the question, and that at all events it will be quite essential to be able to state to Parliament that it has undergone the thorough investigation of Government on both sides of the water.—Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

Peel's reply is valuable, not only as showing his just appreciation of the difficulty of the Irish tithe question, but also as foreshadowing the course which he was preparing to propose of mitigating the severity of our criminal law, which was still written in characters of blood, and the progressive amelioration of which is not one of his least titles to honorable fame.

*Private.*

Lulworth Castle, October 12th, 1822.

MY DEAR LORD LIVERPOOL,

You may rely upon my presence in London at any time whatever when it may be thought advisable that the members of the Government should meet. I cordially concur with you in the policy of fully considering, while we have time properly to consider them, all those subjects which during the session will in all probability be pressed upon the notice of Parliament, many of which it would be proper for the Government to take into their own hands, and on almost all of which it would be most desirable to be enabled to pronounce a decided and well-considered opinion.

I have endeavoured to put everything immediately connected with the Home Office in a proper train for discussion with effect in the Cabinet.

While in Scotland I saw the heads of the respective courts, and begged them most earnestly to consider those alterations in the law of Scotland, particularly the criminal law, which have been so repeatedly and with so much effect proposed in the House of Commons. I told them that, in the present spirit of the times, it was vain to attempt to defend what is established merely because it is established; that practices existed in Scotland in the administration of the law (such, for instance, as the nomination of the jury by the judge who was to try the cause) totally different from English practice, and rather repugnant to English feelings; that it might possibly be right to maintain such practices, but we could not maintain them without a discussion, or conduct that discussion very creditably without arguments. If the arguments in favour of the existing practice are better than the arguments in favour of the proposed change,

or if they are as good, I assured them we could not maintain it ; but if, upon consideration, we ourselves feel that they are not tenable, I tried to convince them that it was the best policy to take to ourselves the credit of the reform, and that by being the authors of it we should have the best chance of prescribing limits to the innovation.

Some days since I wrote a letter to the Lord Advocate, suggesting that a distinct reference on all the proposed alterations in the Scotch law should be made to the chief judges of the courts, Lord President (Hope), Lord Justice Clerk (Boyle), Chief Baron (Shepherd), Chief Commissioner of Jury Court (Adam), and that with them should be associated Baron Hume, the author of the work of the highest authority on the criminal law of Scotland. I will take care to make the reference in such terms as shall show that the opinion of the judges is merely called for to assist the Government in its consideration of the subject, and is not intended to fetter the discussion of it, and still less that of Parliament.

It is at least equally necessary that we should make up our minds with respect to the course to be pursued in the House of Commons when the criminal law of England shall be brought under consideration in the House of Commons. Of course you recollect the resolution moved last session by Mackintosh, pledging the House to consider it with a view to mitigate its severity.

It appears to me that it will be for our advantage, and for the advantage of the question itself, to consider it in its details ; not to argue as if there was some criminal code which must be maintained in all its integrity, but to look at all the offences which are now punishable with death, to select those (if there be any) which can be safely visited with a mitigated punishment, and to be prepared to assign our reasons for maintaining the punishment of death in each case in which it ought to be maintained. I really do not think that there is, when the question is looked at in its details, any irreconcilable difference upon points of real importance between the reasonable advocates for the mitigation of the criminal law and the reasonable defenders of it ; those, on the one hand, who think it impossible to find an Act of Parliament relating to criminal offences which ought to

be touched; or, on the other, who would leave no discretion to the judge, and would apportion a certain punishment to each offence without reference to all their circumstances, which constitute the real character and magnitude of offence a thousand times more than the mere technical name in an Act of Parliament can do, are, I should think, very limited in number.

Ireland will, I fear, be the fruitful source of discussion, as the course which I have pursued, and which I previously arranged with Goulburn, is the very one suggested by the Chancellor, who wished to be able to assign the King's commands for a revision of the magistracy. I hope some immediate and effectual steps will be taken. I certainly will write both to Lord Wellesley and to Goulburn upon the subject of Irish tithes, but I am very sorry we had not a meeting of the Government upon it at the end of the last session. I wish I could have explained to Lord Wellesley the general view of the Government, after a discussion in Cabinet, upon many points which involve something more than mere local considerations. Upon the nature of the compensation to be made to the Church in lieu of tithe, or that part which may be relinquished; upon the extent to which it is to be made; whether it is to include legal rights to tithe, or those only which have been actually exercised; whether any proposed change in the law shall affect the present incumbents, or shall be limited to their successors, are topics upon which the Irish Government might perhaps fairly say to us, "Let us know your opinion upon the general principle of the measure, and we will consider of the execution of its details."

The Irish Government certainly understands that Irish tithes may, with the full consent of the King's Government, be dealt with as a question not necessarily connected with the same description of property in England; but in any general and really effective measure for the commutation of tithe in Ireland you must have, I think, to discuss many points materially affecting in principle the property of the Church in both countries.

It is not quite fair to write such a letter to you, and address it to you at Walmer during your holidays.

Ever, my dear Lord Liverpool, most sincerely yours,

ROBERT PEEL.

Lord Liverpool's own sentiments on the best mode of settling the tithe question, so important, as he rightly judged it to be, to the peace of Ireland, are contained in a letter which before the end of the year he wrote to the Lord Chancellor, and which lays down the principles on which he afterwards proceeded; the mere explanation of which, as he gives it, is sufficient not only to show their reasonableness and justice, but his own aptitude in devising details.

*Private.*

Fife House, November 30th, 1822.

MY DEAR LORD,

We propose to meet on Monday next to renew the consideration of the tithe question. If we could agree upon any general principle, the details might be left to the Government of Ireland, and they have, as you know, powerful assistance both in the Law and the Church.

I confess I think the nearer we could come to the principle of some of our own Enclosure Acts the better. Might we not obviate by this means the great difficulty and nuisance of parish vestries, and other public meetings; and is there anything in the principle of commutation that is more at variance with the rights of property than some of the Enclosure bills to which I refer?

There would, indeed, be this distinction in favour of the former, that the settlements under the Enclosure bills are always final; whereas it is generally agreed, and I think properly, that the settlement in this commutation of tithes shall, in the first instance, be not for more than twenty-one years, and that such party shall come into the lawful possession of all its original rights at the expiration of that period.

Suppose, now, it was provided that a given proportion of the owners or occupiers of land in any parish (say not fewer than one-third in number and one-half in value) should agree with the incumbent upon the appointment of one commissioner, who should determine and settle the value of the tithes of such parish, and assign the rateable proportion upon each separate property in it.



If the two parties so described could agree upon the appointment of any one such person, the matter might be left to his decision, conformably, I believe, to usage in other cases. But, in most cases, such agreement is perhaps not to be expected. Why, then, should not the same proportion of occupiers and proprietors be authorised to name one person, the incumbent another, and the Lord Lieutenant a third? The decision of the majority of this board being final, I can see no insurmountable difficulty nor injustice in this mode of proceeding. It obviates all the embarrassment of public meetings, except upon the single question of nominating a commissioner, and the only serious difficulty then remaining would be (and a very important difficulty it is), whether you must lay down in the Act some principle upon which the commutation is to be made, or whether, in consideration that there is no permanent sacrifice of right, you might leave this to the discretion of the parties deciding. If this last could be done, there would be many advantages in it. You would avoid the conflicting and different principles of the extreme right on the one hand, and the *uti possidetis* on the other.

The equity of the case, we should all agree, was between the two, but in what degree must depend upon circumstances, and I do not see how those circumstances can ever be decided except by reciprocal forbearance and sacrifice, or by something like arbitration.

Have the goodness to turn all these ideas in your mind, and assist us with any lights which may come before you. It is a most momentous question, but one, I believe, on which the peace of the Church in Ireland depends, as much as the peace of the country.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

To the LORD CHANCELLOR.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

Increasing prosperity of the country—Conciliatory spirit of our foreign policy—Lord Londonderry's denunciation of the Holy Alliance—Rashness of Ferdinand of Spain—Civil war in Spain—The French send an army towards the Spanish frontier—The Duke of Wellington quits Verona—Announces our recognition of the Spanish Colonies in South America—Lord Grey attacks the policy of the Cabinet—Lord Ellenborough moves an address condemnatory of the Government—Lord Liverpool's reply—Degree in which Lord Liverpool himself guided the whole policy of the Government—Result of the French invasion of Spain—Great reduction of taxation—Letter to Lord Grenville on the Sinking Fund—Lord Liverpool's continued advocacy of Free Trade—The Duke of Devonshire's motion on Ireland—Lord Limerick's speech on the real object of the Rockites, as avowed by themselves—Comparison with the present object of the Fenians—The new Tithe Bill—State of parties in France.

THE year which followed was, on the whole, one of tranquillity for the Administration. Its character, and also the general condition of the country, are sufficiently seen in the circumstance that the most animated discussions which took place in Parliament arose on questions of foreign policy rather than on the affairs of the kingdom itself. Indeed, as early as the first week of February, the ministers could venture to put into the King's mouth the assertion, that both our manufactures and our commerce were in a state of vigorous activity and progressive prosperity; and, though the same speech confessed with sorrow that the farmers were still suffering, it was in accordance with every principle of common sense as well

as of political economy, if indeed the two are not different names for the same thing, that it also expressed a confident hope that the thriving condition of the other sources of natural wealth "could not fail to contribute to the gradual improvement of that great interest which was the most important of them all." The maxims which since the war had regulated our foreign policy, and the circumstances under which they had been maintained and conspicuously exhibited during the past year, were alluded to in a paragraph which stated that, "faithful to the principles which his Majesty had promulgated to the world as constituting the rule of his conduct, his Majesty had declined being a party to any proceedings at Verona which could be deemed an interference in the internal concerns of Spain on the part of foreign powers; and his Majesty had since used, and continued to use his most anxious endeavours and good offices to allay the irritation unhappily subsisting between the French and Spanish governments, and to avert, if possible, the calamity of war between France and Spain."

The good offices thus mentioned proved fruitless, and the want of success which in this instance attended the efforts of our diplomatists afforded the Opposition an opportunity of which, in an evil hour for their fame, they availed themselves, to attack the ministers for having exerted themselves in such a direction. It may be a temptation to a factious spirit to see its antagonists admitting that they have failed to attain an end for which they have laboured; but it was a singular spectacle, and one which certainly may assist us in forming a correct estimate of the sincerity of their former professions, to behold the Whig leaders becoming the apostles of intervention in the affairs of other nations, and proclaiming loudly that they would have accepted the consequences of the interference which they recommended, even if it had produced instant and lasting war. Luckily Lord Liverpool's wisdom was of a higher order than Lord Grey's. We have seen that from the very first he and

Lord Castlereagh had disapproved of the whole framing and conclusion of the Holy Alliance, though, from delicacy to a susceptible ally, they permitted themselves to speak indulgently of the objects of its contriver. They had since steadily avoided being entangled in any of the measures which seemed to flow from that treaty, even when the end professedly aimed at was one of so plausible a character as the arresting of the revolutionary spirit which was not feebly menacing the throne of more than one sovereign. And when, at the Congress of Laybach, the Emperors of Austria and Russia resolved to send an army into the kingdom of Naples, Lord Castlereagh protested against their determination in an energetic circular which he transmitted as the rule of their conduct to the British ambassadors at the different courts of the Continent. "Such a line of conduct, if intended to lead to reciprocity of action, was inconsistent with the fundamental laws of Great Britain. Even if not so designed, it was fraught with danger. It must lead to a system of continual interference in the domestic affairs of other states incompatible both with the general interests of Europe, and with the real authority and dignity of independent sovereigns." These were sagacious words; and Canning, who fully participated in his predecessor's sentiments, was equally prepared to carry them out in action.

It was not, however, to be concealed that the crisis was serious, and of a character, especially when our own national recollections and glories were taken into account, to induce many to think it sufficient to justify a departure from this strict rule of non-intervention and neutrality. The termination of the Peninsular war, and the overthrow of Napoleon and his family had not proved an unalloyed blessing to Spain. Ferdinand, whose restoration was the immediate consequence of the peace, had neither capacity himself, nor counsellors of a sagacity sufficient to make amends for his want of it; and he was as convinced both of his right and of his power to establish a despotic authority over the

whole kingdom as if he had not been for years an exile and a prisoner. His decrees were at once arbitrary and vacillating ; but the punishments inflicted on all who failed to obey them were merciless and unavoidable. Many fled the kingdom : a still more formidable number, since among them were soldiers, officers, and even regiments, broke out into open revolt. He sought to pacify so unexpected a resistance by concessions, but none believed in his sincerity. He convoked the Cortes, but their first votes went to annul the most important ordinances which he had lately issued. He had recalled the Jesuits. The Cortes re-enacted the old laws against them, and generally passed edicts to bridle the power of the clergy and ecclesiastical orders, whom he looked on as the chief props of his throne. The only step which they wished to carry out, and which he looked on as conceived in his interest, they proved unable to execute. They endeavoured to put down the revolutionary clubs which had been called into existence by his despotism, but they found that they were provoking an enemy more powerful than themselves ; for the clubs openly defied both them and the King, and presently began, without disguise, to talk of dethroning him if he should presume in any particular to oppose the will of the nation, of which they constituted themselves the sole interpreters ; and, to show that these were not empty threats, they raised bands of armed men, who traversed the country, seized several of his most distinguished or most influential adherents, and transported them to the islands beyond the Atlantic. Soon the whole country, and especially Madrid, became the scene of the most sanguinary and lawless outrages. Ferdinand summoned a fresh Cortes ; they were more hostile to him than the last ; but they overshot their mark. So furious was their whole legislation, if legislation that could be called which was rather a suspension of all law, and so great was the terror which their violence spread through all classes, that at last it raised a feeling in favour of Ferdinand himself : large bodies of men raised his



standard, forming themselves into irregular troops and placing themselves generally under the command of some priestly or peasant leader, many of whom, like the guerilla chieftains of the Peninsular war, displayed considerable military talents. By the summer of 1822 a civil war was raging throughout the whole of the northern provinces. Only a very small portion of the regular army, the Royal Guard and some regiments of infantry, quartered in Andalusia, remained faithful to the King: but all hope from them was destroyed at the very outset; they were attacked in detail, defeated, and almost annihilated; and Ferdinand, in dismay, submitted to all the demands of the revolutionary party. They compelled him to appoint a new ministry from their own party, which proceeded to the most cruel treatment of the royalists, even putting to death many of the most influential of them for their exertions in his cause; while, on the other hand, those of his partisans who still maintained themselves in the north, though fighting in his name, or, we should rather say, for the monarchy, refused any longer to acknowledge his authority, but appointed a regency to administer the government, while he should continue, as they not untruly affirmed him at present to be, in captivity.

Their regency, however, had but a brief existence. General Mina, who had been placed at the head of the revolutionary army, showed a degree of skill and likewise of cruelty far exceeding his antagonists. He speedily forced their principal stronghold, the well-fortified town of Castelfollit, and the atrocious ferocity with which he massacred the garrison, and even the unarmed population, terrified other places into unresisting submission; till at last the royalist leaders abandoned the struggle and fled into France, leaving the Government, and even the King himself, in the hands of those who certainly bore the most determined hostility to his authority, and, as many feared, but little goodwill to his person.

These events, which in the autumn of 1822 attracted

the attention of the statesmen of every country, produced, not unnaturally, an especial impression on the French. In that country the higher classes had imbibed from the events of the last thirty years a deep horror of revolution of any kind; while the relationship between the reigning families, though now somewhat remote, disposed Louis himself to view the insults offered to his royal kinsman with a still warmer interest and more resolute antipathy. The French Government therefore at once began to move troops towards the Pyrenees, and to form an army of observation, as they called it, the duties of which were professedly limited to the enforcement of sanitary precautions; since, in addition to their political disquietudes, the yellow fever was at this time raging through the northern provinces of Spain, and committing fearful ravages among the population. But the real object of the counsellors of Louis was to employ their army in Spain itself, to re-establish the authority of Ferdinand by force; and the chief endeavours of their plenipotentiary at Verona were directed to the obtaining from the Congress its sanction to such a proceeding. Even before Lord Londonderry's death the desire of the French to interfere in the affairs of Spain had been no secret. And consequently the Cabinet instructions which, with his concurrence, had been drawn up for his guidance, when it was intended that he himself should attend the Congress, were couched in the same spirit which had dictated his protest against the intervention of the Holy Alliance in the affairs of Italy. Canning, as has been said, fully shared his opinions: indeed, if it had not been certain that his general views of foreign policy were almost identical with those of his predecessors, Lord Liverpool would not have been so eager for his co-operation in the Administration at home, and certainly the Duke of Wellington would have been far from showing the earnestness which he did display in pressing on the King the absolute duty of withdrawing his personal objections to him. The Duke, therefore, who, as has been

already mentioned, was now sent in Lord Londonderry's stead to the Congress, took with him the instructions already drawn up for that statesman's rule of conduct, and carried them out with great firmness, and no small diplomatic address. The latter was the quality first called forth. France, as we have seen, was eager, or, as the result proved, determined at any risk to move her army into Spain. And Alexander of Russia, desirous to find any pretext for interfering in the affairs of Western Europe, had secretly concerted with M. de Montmorenci, the French plenipotentiary, a proposal to aid France in any military operation which she might be compelled to undertake beyond the Pyrenees with an army of 150,000 men. But the Duke, while he declined to answer any of the hypothetical questions<sup>1</sup> which M. de Montmorenci addressed to the allies as a body, yet refused so distinctly to become a party to any engagement such as Russia was willing to take upon herself, and at the same time urged upon the whole Congress so forcibly the dangers to which such a co-operation as Russia proposed would expose France (since for France to require such assistance would be tantamount to a confession that she distrusted the fidelity of her own troops, an admission which of itself would be no slight provocation to disaffection), that M. de Montmorenci himself came over to his opinion, and became as averse to the proposal of Russia as he had at first been anxious to invite it. Nor was the neutrality which the Duke asserted limited to an abstinence from active or armed intervention. The other members of the Holy Alliance in a great degree shared the views of France and Russia; they avowed their conviction that it was desirable in some way or other to secure such a chastisement of the Spanish revolutionists as should strike a salutary terror into all who held similar views in other countries. And, when the Duke's arguments had checked

<sup>1</sup> Capefigue (*Histoire de la Restauration*, vii. 387). Châteaubriand (*Congrès de Vérone*, i. 115).

the desire which they all at one time entertained to afford France the substantial aid of bodies of troops, they proposed that each nation should address a separate note to Spain, insisting on the adoption by that country of a specified line of conduct, and enforcing its demands by threats of war in the event of non-compliance. But such a plan as this had equally been foreseen by the English Cabinet, and had been provided for in Wellington's instructions; in accordance with which he replied that "to animadvert on the internal transactions of an independent state, unless they affected the essential interests of British subjects, was inconsistent with the principles which invariably guided his Government."

But this part of his remonstrance fell upon deaf ears. Austria, Russia, and Prussia persisted in their plan of sending such notes; though, when the Duke enquired what they intended to do if the disregard of them by the Spaniards should lead to war, and war to the subjugation of Spain, he was unable to obtain any distinct answer, apparently because they had not resolved on their future course in such an event, and were unable to perceive the loss of dignity which would accrue from an utterance of threats without any attempt to give effect to them. And, as this general adoption of a line of conduct which he could neither unite in nor approve rendered his presence at the Congress superfluous, and indeed in some degree inconsistent with our national dignity, he quitted Verona before the end of November. Before he departed he announced, according to instructions which he had just received, that the British Government had decided on acknowledging the independence of the Spanish colonies in South America, and was preparing to enter into negotiations with them. For those important settlements had revolted from the mother country several years before, asserting their independence as separate nations; and the general mutiny of the Spanish armies had prevented any efforts on a scale adequate to the occasion from being

made to maintain the authority of Spain. The consequences of such a position of affairs were in the highest degree mischievous to our commerce in those quarters. For as Spain, which still claimed the supreme authority there, did in fact exercise no power whatever, and as the Governments which had been established in the different states had abundant employment in regulating their internal concerns, and had no time to spare for other matters, bands of pirates sprang up, sometimes hoisting the Spanish flag, and often seeking shelter in the different ports of the Spanish main, against whom, as Spain herself either could not or would not chastise or check them, we had no means of protecting our merchants without the aid or the sanction of the new Governments; and the co-operation of those could only be obtained by treaties which involved the recognition of their independence by our sovereign.

The announcement of our intentions on this subject was received with more displeasure by the allies than even our previous refusal to approve of the measures proposed for adoption with respect to the Spanish dominions in Europe. The members of the Holy Alliance unanimously declared it inconsistent with international law to recognise the independence of the Spanish colonies, unless the King of Spain himself renounced his claims upon them; and France was equally decided in her language, and even more earnest in her secret views, because she entertained the design of lending her aid to Spain to reduce the colonies to obedience, in the hope of obtaining a portion of them as the reward of her assistance. However, all formal expressions of the opinions of our Government were terminated by the departure of the Duke of Wellington from Verona. As he had recently been instructed to do, he returned through France, and sought interviews both with King Louis himself, and also with M. de Villèle, his Prime Minister. To the first he privately urged the extreme impolicy of separating himself from the alliance of England, for an object in which France had but a remote, if not



an wholly imaginary interest. And to the minister he made a formal offer of the mediation of Great Britain between France and Spain, which a recent despatch from M. San Miguel, the Foreign Secretary at Madrid, to M. de Colomb, the Spanish *chargé d'affaires* in London, gave us reason to think would be thankfully and cordially accepted by the Spanish authorities. But his remonstrances and his offers were equally fruitless. A strong party among the French was bent on the invasion of Spain. The minister for war, one of Napoleon's old marshals, Victor, Duc de Belluno, was not ashamed to found his recommendation of such a step on the necessity of finding employment for the army to prevent its becoming disaffected; and the speech with which Louis opened his Chambers on the 28th of January, a week before the meeting of our own Parliament, announced that he had recalled his ambassador from Madrid, and that an army of 100,000 men, under the command of a royal Prince, the Duc d'Angoulême, was ready to enter Spain, "invoking," as his Majesty expressed it, "the God of St. Louis to preserve the throne of Spain to a descendant of Henry IV., to save that kingdom from ruin, and to reconcile it to Europe."

Our efforts to preserve peace had failed: and the mere fact of the failure was in the eyes of the Opposition in both Houses sufficient ground for that fierce attack on the Ministry to which allusion has been already made. The discussion in the House of Lords, which for the purpose of this narrative it will be sufficient to notice, was in some degree envenomed by the personal jealousy with which Lord Grey always regarded Canning; a feeling in this instance sufficiently powerful to lead him to abandon all the maxims of his party, all the principles which he himself had urged upon Parliament in the revolutionary war, and to become the advocate of intervention, and that too intervention of the most unstatesmanlike and impotent kind, an intervention of threats. He avowed

indeed, that he would have been prepared to go further : "He would not have counselled the use of any threat if he had not been prepared to put it in practice." But in the very next sentence he admitted in such plain terms his conviction, "that it was the interest of the country to be at peace ; and, if ever it was most peculiarly desirable for this country to remain at peace, it was so now ;" and again, that "a war must not only be just, but must be called for by distinct interests ;" that he must himself have felt it questionable whether he would have been able to induce the country to sanction a war for objects in which this nation had no concern whatever. Lord Grey, however, went further : forgetting the incessant mistakes into which his fondness for prophecy had led him in the former war, he ventured on fresh predictions. He declared that, if the war on which France was now engaging should "continue for a year, or even for six months, it would be impossible for us to remain at peace." And he closed a violent harangue by declaring that "an imputation must necessarily rest upon every man who had taken an active part in public life, and who did not come forward to resist to the utmost, and to condemn in the strongest possible terms, this unjust and most wanton aggression. He had said enough to relieve himself from all participation in the foulest disgrace that had ever befallen this country."

It was not difficult to obtain a superiority over an arguer who recommended such a course as had been advocated by Lord Grey, who based his advice on such grounds, and who had in effect almost answered himself. For, if his speech had exonerated him from all participation in the French invasion of Spain, it was certainly notorious that the Ministry had condemned it in as strong terms as he himself, protesting against it to the very prince who had since perpetrated it ; while to impute as a disgrace to this nation, that her rulers declined to involve her in war to prevent others from attacking (however wantonly and iniquitously) a country which we were in no respect bound

to protect, and of which we had many grave reasons to complain, was an abuse of language that it would have been a mockery to term argument. Lord Liverpool had already embodied his own views on the question in a minute which he had circulated among his colleagues as soon as it was ascertained that negotiation had failed to arrest the advance of the French army.

*Considerations on the French armies invading Spain, 1823.*

I believe I may consider it as an undoubted fact that the war against Spain is generally unpopular and odious in France, not only amongst the commercial and quiet part of the community, but likewise with the army.

If Great Britain should take part in the war, the French Government would not fail to avail themselves of this circumstance to convert the Spanish war into an English war, and thereby to render it popular with the military, and with a great part of the nation, who would consider that in such a war (as far as glory and honour are concerned), they have everything to retrieve, and nothing to lose.

But what are we to do in such a war? Is it to be a land war?

If so, experience proves that the defence of Spain would be thrown almost exclusively on this country, and we should be involved in an expense which would be quite ruinous to us.

This would be the case if we had an army ready to take the field to resist the invasion of the French, but we have not now any such army; and it would probably require a campaign or two to form one. Let it be considered, moreover, that Spain is at present a divided nation; that we know not how to estimate the comparative strength of the Royalists and Constitutionalists; and that, even if we were prepared to encounter the French, it would not be desirable on any account to be opposed in the field by the Spanish Royalists.

If our efforts are to be confined to the sea, I do not understand how by this means the Spaniards can be materially assisted, or the French (if likely otherwise to be successful) effectually baffled.

We are next to consider that the great Continental Powers are, in a degree, committed to support France against Spain. I do

not think that, under any circumstances, the Emperor of Austria would take part directly against us ; but the Emperor of Russia and King of Prussia would probably resent our conduct, and we might risk, in consequence, Hanover, Portugal, and our connection with the Netherlands.

I would further observe that the French war against Spain may be unsuccessful. It may be unsuccessful from the character and pertinacity of the Spaniards, and possibly, though perhaps not probably, from mutiny in the French army.

If it is successful in the outset, the success may be limited to the parts of the territory covered by the French armies. The success, therefore, may be only partial. France may be engaged in a long struggle which she may ultimately be obliged to abandon.

Considering, therefore, the risk we should incur, the little good we could do, the chances of avoiding war by delay altogether, and the danger of making a war, unpopular now, popular in France, I think our policy should be, in the first instance, neutrality.

We must not conceal from ourselves, however, that France may be successful. She may set Ferdinand at liberty, and restore him to a great share of power. She may take advantage of this circumstance to re-establish French influence at Madrid, and to renew, if not in terms, in effect, the family compact. She may further attempt to carry into execution, what she has already held out, the measure of putting at the command of Spain her fleets and armies to assist the Spanish operations in South America.

It cannot be denied that after the forward and successful part Great Britain took in the last Spanish contest, the re-establishment of the French influence at Madrid must be mortifying to us ; but I think it would be better to run this risk, than run all the other risks attendant on our being engaged in the war in the first instance.

Here, however, forbearance should stop. We have the means of easily and effectually preventing any such projects on the part of Spain and France as those to which I have referred, respecting South America, being carried into execution.

Here, our naval superiority would tell. Here, a maritime war



would be to the purpose, and I should have no difficulty in deciding that we ought to prevent, by every means in our power, perhaps Spain from sending a single Spanish regiment to South America, after the supposed termination of the war in Spain, but certainly France from affording to Spain any aid or assistance for that purpose.

There is another case which must not be overlooked. 'The attack upon Portugal may follow the success in Spain. We should certainly, in this case, be bound in honour, if not in good faith, to defend Portugal.

This is, however, a contingency which may not occur; and, if it should occur, the military defence of Portugal I consider as an object attended with much fewer difficulties than a land war in Spain, assuming always that the Portuguese are desirous of defending themselves, and ask for our assistance.

The arguments adduced in this carefully considered paper, were well calculated to command the assent of his colleagues; and when expanded, were equally fitted to convince a more impartial assembly. They may be looked on as the text which he elaborated and amplified in the House of Lords.

In two admirably reasoned speeches<sup>1</sup> he explained and justified the whole policy of the Administration. He admitted frankly that "his Majesty's Government were firmly convinced that every effort ought to be made by this country to prevent, if possible, the peace of the world from being disturbed by a contest between France and Spain. They had felt it incumbent on them to use every effort consistent with the national honour for the purpose of preventing the occurrence of such a calamity. And they were bound to do so from a regard to the interests of all parties; from a regard to the interest of Spain; from

<sup>1</sup> The first was delivered April 14, when he himself laid on the table papers relating to the negotiations at Verona, and to the affairs of France and Spain. And the second April 24, when Lord Ellenborough moved an address to the King "highly disapproving of the conduct of his Majesty's ministers," &c.



a regard to the interest of France ; from a regard to the interest of the whole of Europe. For what man could say, when once hostilities were commenced, and commenced on such a principle, where they would terminate ? We owed it therefore to France ; we owed it to Spain ; we owed it to Europe ; and still more, we owed it to ourselves to adopt such means of attempting to prevent the actual occurrence of war between France and Spain, as were consistent with the safety, the interests, and the character of this country. And it happened that we were placed in a situation which gave us an especial right to offer our mediation or good offices on the subject, since it was not very long before that Spain had invited our amicable interposition, and France herself had begged us to assist with our advice for the purpose of averting war. We did not therefore volunteer our offer of mediation. It did not originate on our part, or from any regard to our own peculiar interests, although, if it had so originated, he should have thought, a perfectly justifiable and honorable proposal ; but it originated in the desire and application of the Governments both of Spain and France for the friendly interposition of this country ; and on the part of Spain it was assumed that, even if she should be engaged in a defensive war against France, Great Britain would maintain a strict neutrality. Even when the French Government declined the mediation which the Duke of Wellington had been instructed to offer, on the ground that the existing differences with Spain were not of that specific nature which would admit of mediation, they still expressed a wish that the good offices of this country might be exerted with Spain to restore a friendly understanding between the two countries.

“With respect to the conduct pursued by France, while the gradual increase of strength and the position of the French army on the frontier were very naturally the object of Spanish jealousy, it was nevertheless vain to deny that circumstances had occurred calculated to afford a plausible

excuse to France for keeping up an army on her frontier. There could be no question of the right of France to maintain such a force in such a place ; and, looking at the state of parties in that country, remembering that France was now a limited monarchy, administered by responsible advisers, whose opinion and conduct must in some degree be influenced by popular feeling and subject to popular control, no one could say that under the existing circumstances France could fairly be required or expected to withdraw her army from the neighbourhood of the Pyrenees unless the conduct of the Spanish Government removed the reasons for which she had brought it thither."

Another peer also, of great oratorical ability, Lord Ellenborough, attacked the policy of the Government on this question, moving an address to the King in condemnation of it, in which he desired the House to express its "disapproval of the conduct of the ministers in having, for the sake and at the desire of France, suggested to the Spanish people the expediency of making alterations in their constitution similar to those which France proposed as the alternative of hostilities, without having received any positive assurance that such concession on the part of Spain would secure her from further interference in her internal affairs; and in having shown throughout the whole course of the late negotiations more solicitude to save the French Government from disgrace and danger than to maintain the interests of Spain, which must have been endangered by the slightest concession on the demand of a foreign power, and under the menace of a foreign war as the penalty of her refusal."

To this second attack Lord Liverpool replied that "there was no consideration on earth that would have induced his Majesty's Government to recommend to the Government of Spain, even in the most amicable manner, to concede one tittle of her constitutional rights, or to give up one atom of their system which they conscientiously thought of importance to their liberty or safety. But we were well

aware, as all the rest of the world were, that there were defects in the Spanish constitution so great and notorious that there was not a reasonable man in Spain itself who was not ready to admit that some modifications of it were indispensable; and, when our advice was asked by the Spanish Government, we were bound to take into consideration the existence of a civil war in Spain, and the means which in her present circumstances she might have of resisting an immediate attack by France, should such an attack be made. He could come to no other conclusion than that, though the means of ultimate resistance possessed by Spain are greater than those of perhaps any other country, yet that for the moment she was in great degree helpless. As in the last contest, she might ultimately be successful; but she could not expect to purchase that success without first passing through the severest sufferings, without seeing her fairest provinces overrun by the invading army, her country pillaged and desolated. And in such a state of affairs he did think that if there were any points in their constitution which the Spaniards themselves considered would hereafter be a fair subject of change or modification, they might very beneficially do at once what they would be disposed to do some time hence, or at least agree to some declaration that they would make such modifications as soon as it should be practicable. Spain might do this, he thought, without doing violence to her honour, or in the least trenching on her independence. And our recommendations that she should so act were conveyed in the sincerest spirit of conciliation and amity, not by any means as demands, but as the intimation of a friendly opinion; not subjecting the party to whom they were offered to any penalty if he did not listen to them. They were tendered as the well-meant advice of one ally to another, founded on the clearest view which we were able to take of the best interests of that country. But this advice was given before the King of France's speech to his Chambers, and while we still hoped that if taken it might prove the

means of averting war. That speech caused a great alteration in the state of affairs, and though a week later, on the first day of the session, he himself stated that he did not consider the door as closed against all hope of the preservation of peace, yet he also felt it his duty no longer to urge any concessions on the Spanish Government.

"But by far the most material question was, what ought to be the policy of this country now? Our policy was neutrality; and it was very material to remark, what the papers which he had presented to the House abundantly proved, that, from the very beginning to the end of the negotiations, and in every stage of the proceedings, his Majesty's Government had distinctly avowed to Spain that such was their determination, and that this was our policy was distinctly understood by the Spanish Government. Our friendly interference was only asked by them on the understanding that if our efforts should be unsuccessful we were to remain strictly neutral. There had, therefore, been no ambiguity, no misconception, on that point. No delusion had been practised towards Spain, nor did she complain of our conduct. The reasons why he and his colleagues looked upon neutrality as the proper policy of this country he was equally ready to explain.

"In considering the duty of the British Government as to the alternative of neutrality or war, he was bound, in the first instance, to advert to our own domestic situation. He had no difficulty in declaring that if either the honour or the essential interests of the country should require us to engage in war, he should be at no difficulty in finding the means to support it without materially impairing any of the great sources of our prosperity: though, while he said this, he must also add that, after all the hardships and sufferings which, in consequence of our unparalleled exertions, the country had undergone, it could not be consistent with true wisdom or sound policy to replunge the country into all the inconveniences and evils of a new war without a clear and obvious necessity; more particularly at such

a time as this; when our commerce and manufactures were not only recovering from their former depression, but advancing to a degree of prosperity which they never before enjoyed; and when even our agriculture, the last interest to recover because the last to suffer, was also beginning to revive. No rational man could fail to acknowledge that at such a moment it was most desirable for this country to continue at peace, if peace could be preserved consistently with our honour and with our essential interests, and that we should not throw away a great proportion of the advantages which we were now enjoying into the hands of other countries.

“But, in the second place, if we were to determine between neutrality and war, it was necessary for us also to consider what would be the nature of the war in which we should have to embark, if such should be our determination. We should not merely have to equip a fleet, to send a supply of arms and ammunition, and to send a moderate subsidy: no, if we embarked with Spain in this contest, we must embark in it as we embarked before, with all our power and with all our means:

“‘*Toto certandum est corpore regni.*’

We must send an army to Spain, and the very first brigade that we landed there would bring the burden of the whole Spanish war upon our shoulders. In the last war we had soon become the principals, and so must we become again if we were to enter into war.

“Thirdly, we must look at the different situation of Spain in 1808 and now. In the last war, let it be recollected, we did not go to war in support of the Spanish revolution, but that revolution found us engaged in war. And again, in the last war in which we engaged in Spain, the cause of Spain was indeed important in itself, but it was not the end so much as the means of the contest. The end was the safety of Europe. Spain afforded the most advantageous stage on which to maintain the cause of



Europe. But what was the state of Spain herself? She was an united country. From one end of Spain to the other there was no difference of sentiment. There may have been individual traitors or cowards; the spirit of patriotism may have been more fervent and energetic in one province than in another; but he had a right to say that the universal feeling was at that time embodied in favour of the cause for which we lent our aid to Spain. Would that be the case now? Spain was now a divided country: not divided as countries sometimes are, when all the active spirits and all the enthusiasm are on one side, and only the quiescent parts of the population on the other; but divided with just as much enthusiasm and determination on one side as on the other. While he was speaking there was a civil war in Spain, a war of the country against the towns, a war of the priests and the peasants against the lawyers, the mechanics, and the shopkeepers; a war in which the intelligence might be on one side, but in which it was evident that all the old stubborn prejudices were on the other. The fanaticism of liberty might be with the Government, but the fanaticism of religion was with those who opposed that Government. The question therefore which, in this divided state of Spain, we were called on to decide was, not whether we were prepared to embark in a war for the purpose of supporting the cause of all Spain against France, but whether we were prepared to engage in a war for the purpose of assisting one half of the Spanish people against the other half.

“Fourthly, he was desirous of adverting to another view of the subject, which might have some weight even with his opponents. It was notorious that the war with Spain was not on the whole popular in France. It was not popular with the great mass of the people, nor with the commercial classes, nor even entirely so with the army, since it was a war in which the soldiers must feel, and did feel that, whatever might be its result, but little glory

would be obtained by it. But did any man believe that, if this country were to take part in the war, the immediate effect would not be to change the whole feeling of the French nation with respect to it, and so to make the war more or less popular among all classes of Frenchmen? Before three weeks had passed over our heads the Spanish war would, in the feelings of every Frenchman, be merged in the English war. It must be so in the nature of things. It had been so before. It had been so in the year 1739, when our Government was forced, against their will and judgment, by the clamours of the people, into a war with Spain. No war ever excited a more general feeling of enthusiasm in this country; the two Houses of Parliament even came to an unanimous resolution that no peace should be made with Spain until the right of search (the attempt to enforce which by the Spaniards on the coast of Spanish America was the origin of the contest) should be renounced by the Spanish Government. It happened, however, that in the course of a short time afterwards we became involved in war with France on wholly different grounds. What was the consequence? The cause of the war with Spain was lost in it, and was totally forgotten: the vote of the Houses of Parliament was forgotten also. Even in the treaty which concluded the war not one word was said of the original subject of dispute with Spain. And so it would be again. No man, whatever might be his opinion as to the expediency of the measure, could doubt that, the moment we went to war with France, the war between France and Spain, except as far as Spain might be the theatre of operations, would be wholly forgotten, and that nobody would talk or think of anything but the war between France and Great Britain."

"But," continued Lord Liverpool, "I know it has been said that the mere menace of war, if it had been thrown out, might have prevented the aggression of France. I ask your lordships, would any man have seriously recommended that we should throw out such a menace unless

we were prepared, in the event of its proving ineffectual, to enforce it? Was it not necessary, then, that we should first determine that war would be politic, wise, and expedient, before we determined on uttering any menace? Can anything be conceived more unworthy, base, and humiliating than to vent idle threats, and, when we find them disregarded, to turn round and decline to realize them? Though menace might precede war, therefore, the policy of menace must be subservient to the policy of war, and we must decide eventually upon the latter before we can have recourse to the former.

“ I have heard it further stated that we may ultimately be compelled to go to war; and that it was therefore better not to forego so advantageous an opportunity. It has been said that France may succeed in conquering Spain, and that she may then attack our ancient ally, Portugal, in which case the interest and honour of this country would oblige us to interfere; or that she may put forward views of ambition and aggrandizement which we could not tolerate. I admit, my lords, that cases affecting the interests and honour of the country may by possibility arise which would compel us to go to war. But, in the first place, I say that, under the present circumstances, the best way to secure that honour and those interests from being endangered is to remain at peace. I have no difficulty in allowing that the consideration of what step it may be our ultimate duty to take may become a very serious one. This, however, is a question which must be determined when the necessity shall arise. It may be wise to encounter a present danger for the purpose of averting a greater danger in future; but this depends, not only on the comparative magnitude of the danger, but on the comparative prospect of immediate and ultimate success on the part of the power which, by its aggression against another state, occasions that danger. All the arguments for maintaining the balance of power are founded on that principle. With respect to the present



case of the invasion of Spain by France, I firmly believe the undertaking of France to be absolutely impracticable unless she is assisted by the greater portion of the Spanish people. If the object of France be unattainable, why should this country interfere? If France have the greater part of the population of Spain on her side, why should we contend against the wishes of so large a part of the Spanish people? Although, therefore, no man is more ready than myself to admit that the calls of national honour are the first which ought to be listened to, I deny that there are any such calls at present, and, that being the case, I again ask your lordships whether the essential interests of the country will not be much better promoted by neutrality than by war?

"No one who knows anything of Spain can well doubt that the first operations of France must be successful. But may not her difficulties begin at the very time when, according to her own principles and expectations, they ought to end? Does it follow that the termination of the career of the French army in Spain must be as fortunate as the commencement may be? I do not say that it will be unfortunate; but I do say that the result of the struggle must, in my opinion, very much depend upon the part which the people of Spain take in it. If they entertain the same hostility towards foreign invaders, and, in particular, towards the French, which they entertained in the late war, I can see no chance of the ultimate success of France. If, on the other hand, the sentiments of the Spaniards are changed in that respect; if they hate the constitution of the Cortes more than they hate the invading armies, that circumstance would afford the strongest prudential reasons against any active interference on the part of this country. There are events which undoubtedly may render our active interference necessary. Of course I cannot foresee what the contingencies of the war may be. The French, it may be said, will ultimately attack Portugal. All that I can say in answer is that his Majesty's Government have

received the most direct and positive assurances from France that she meditates no such step so long as Portugal maintains her neutrality. If this country, my lords, really wishes to maintain peace and to avoid war, I ask why she should now be induced to enter into the contest in which France, most unfortunately for Europe, has engaged, because events may occur to render war necessary, when it must be admitted by every one that the occurrence of such events is, at least, uncertain, and when, according to common probabilities, those events are never likely to arise?

"I assume, then, that our policy is neutrality. If our policy is neutrality, I hope that we shall be honest enough to make our neutrality effective. No man can say when circumstances, not at present existing, may arise which may render it advisable for England to assume a different attitude. It will be open to those who may have the direction of his Majesty's councils, it will be open to Parliament, if a case fairly demanding interference should occur, to recommend and to take such steps as may be necessary to secure the safety and honour of the country. But, until we are forced to a determination of that nature; until we draw the sword and throw away the scabbard; until we do decide that the policy of Great Britain is war, I trust that our neutrality will be real. If the justice of this be admitted as a general principle, and in ordinary cases, this country is especially bound to take care that its neutrality shall always be fair, honest, and effective; for never was there a country which had more abundant and frequent reason to complain of the faithless and hollow neutrality of other countries than Great Britain. The question really is, whether it was or was not for the interest of this country to go to war on account of Spain. I believe that question, if put thus shortly and plainly, would be answered in the negative by ninety-nine out of every hundred individuals in the country."

I have given more than usually copious extracts from



Lord Liverpool's speeches on this subject, because they and the whole transaction to which they refer show how completely he was the presiding genius of the Ministry both in its foreign and domestic policy. It is quite clear from the whole tone of it that the resolution to maintain peace exhibited by the late and the present Secretary of State was a reflection of the judgment deliberately formed by the Prime Minister of what was really required by the honour and interest of this country. His opinions are expressed with precision because they were formed with distinctness. They are announced with firmness because they were not adopted without the most calm and deliberate consideration of all the features of the case ; and because, seeing clearly all its difficulties, he saw also that it became the Prime Minister of this country to confront, not to seek to elude them. He desired to preserve peace, especially peace with France. But he did not, for that reason, forbear to expose in plain terms both the folly and the injustice of her attack upon her weaker neighbour ; nor to show, by his questions to the French Government, the most steadfast determination to protect from her, if need should arise, the one ally whose safety we were really bound to defend, Portugal. Lord Liverpool was not fond of predicting the future ; his caution in that respect often contrasting most advantageously with the unstatesmanlike rashness with which Lord Grey often rushed into prophecy with a hardihood undismayed by his frequent failures. But on this occasion he twice ventured to give utterance to his anticipations, and in each instance his judgment was remarkably verified by the event. He foretold that France would be successful at first, but that difficulties would grow out of her very success ; and secondly that, in every step but the first, her progress or her failure would depend not on her own efforts, but on the extent to which they were in harmony with or in antagonism to the feelings of the majority of the Spaniards themselves. The latter prediction was soon seen to be well founded ; its

truth being practically admitted by the Cortes themselves, who could scarcely find a single battalion disposed to resist the Duc d'Angoulême's advance between the Pyrenees and Seville, and who consequently set Ferdinand at liberty; and the first was still more unmistakeably verified when his Royal Highness returned in disgust to Paris, that he might not appear to countenance Ferdinand's faithless violation of the amnesty which the Cortes had extorted from him; and, finding that he had neither gained influence over the King nor struck any permanent alarm into the Constitutionalists, was forced to content himself with leaving garrisons in some of the principal Spanish fortresses in order to be able the more readily to suppress any fresh outbreak, for which Ferdinand seemed well disposed to afford his people abundant provocation. The case of the Government, as Lord Liverpool presented it to the Peers, was so irrefragably strong that, on the only division which took place, he prevailed by a majority of three to one; and their policy was still more fully justified by the event than even by the votes of Parliament. For while France obtained no advantage from her enterprise, much less any commensurate with its toil and expenditure, we not only enjoyed uninterrupted peace, but ultimately gained a considerable accession of influence from the evidence which these transactions afforded of the accuracy of the political foresight exhibited by those to whom the destinies of the nation were so fortunately entrusted.

Another matter on which our representative at Verona was especially appealed to, was a dispute which had recently arisen between Russia and Turkey on the subject of the navigation of the Black Sea. The sovereignty over the Euxine was admitted to reside in the Porte so completely that no nation had a right to navigate it without her permission. But the Sultan had from time to time made treaties with different kingdoms, which opened it to their flag, and had moreover connived at the use of that flag by vessels of other countries to which no such

permission had been formally given. Recently, however, in consequence of the Greek insurrection which was greatly aided by the power afforded to the insurgents by foreign vessels those licences had been withdrawn: and the withdrawal was most injurious and if not absolutely destructive of the trade of the southern provinces of Russia, which had no other outlet. It was not strange, therefore, that the Czar who, to say the least, had no disinclination to find a pretext for quarrelling with Turkey, addressed vehement complaints of this measure to the Congress: especially endeavouring to induce us to unite with him in his remonstrances to the Turkish authorities. The Duke of Wellington who had more than one conversation on the subject with Alexander wrote home for instructions: and Lord Liverpool's opinion on the subject is expressed in the following extracts from some letters to Canning, from which office the required instructions were to proceed:

Paris.

Palmer Castle, October 21, 1822.

I have read the Duke of Wellington's Despatches: they are very interesting but I think they leave the issue more doubtful than it was some time ago. The question of the Black Sea has more real difficulties attending it than any which has occurred. The Turks have certainly the *de jure* right on that side but it is impossible to expect that the Russians can give up important advantages which they have actually enjoyed for such a number of years and which are essential to their southern provinces as they have little of any mercantile marine of their own and must consequently depend upon foreigners. Under these circumstances I think the alternative<sup>1</sup> proposed by

<sup>1</sup> This will be found in vol. i. of the New Series of Wellington Despatches, see especially p. 320.

<sup>2</sup> The removal of Russia was rather than the Porte should grant to the Kings of Sicily, Denmark, Spain, and Naples, permission for vessels of war to pass their waters for the same or else that Russia should be content with the concessions granted previously to the other powers (vol. i. p. 320, 321).



the Emperor not unreasonable, and, as far as good offices can go, we ought to support them in it.

Ever sincerely yours,

LIVERPOOL.

*Secret and confidential.*

Walmer Castle, October 24, 1822.

My DEAR CANNING,

It was very far from my intention to wish to make the Russian cause as to the navigation of the Black Sea our own. However this and other matters may be ultimately decided, I hope we shall preserve *our neutrality*. Our policy, however, is to prevent war, if possible, between Russia and Turkey; and this question of navigation is a new grievance, and in some respects a more serious one than any which has occurred, because it is not a question of *pride* merely, but one of *interest*.

We must always bear in our mind that the national feeling in Russia is to drive matters to extremities against the Turks. Woronzow's letters to his friend Castalcicala are a pretty good sample of the Russian feeling on Turkish questions, even amongst those who do not desire war for the sake of war, and are enemies to revolutions.

Now are not the commercial interests of Russia essentially involved in this question? Has she any commercial marine of her own? Can she carry on the commerce of her southern provinces except by the means of vessels which have not the right of navigating the Black Sea? Must not this be done either by covering these vessels with *her flag*, or by extending the navigation to the vessels of powers who have not at present the right of navigating there?

The strict right may be, and I believe is, with the Porte; but Russia says the usage has qualified the right. The difficulty of the question appears to me very much to consist in this: a great part of the commerce of Russia was carried on in Greek vessels; of this the Porte was not disposed to complain. *Now* the Greeks are insurgents, and the Turks naturally are jealous that *insurgent vessels* should be covered by the Russian flag. To this the Russians say, "Let this be as heretofore; or, if that cannot be, let us have the advantage that may arise from the



extension of the navigation to the ships of other Mediterranean powers."

If this question cannot in some way be *managed*, I fear an amicable arrangement of difficulties will be quite hopeless. *Our* interest as Great Britain may be against the concession, but I think this would be the very worst ground on which we could stand, particularly where the alternative of the proposition is a more liberal system of navigation.

I may have mistaken some parts of the question, not having all the papers before me ; but I have thrown out my ideas to you as they occur for your consideration.

Ever sincerely yours,

LIVERPOOL.

Canning himself was at first less inclined than his chief to give the Russians any, even the least support in their demands ; being influenced chiefly by a despatch from Lord Strangford, our ambassador at Constantinople, which represented that the Russian commerce was in fact not obstructed, as the Russians asserted it to be ; that it was still carried on without hindrance or diminution in our own vessels, and those of other powers which the Sultan had forborne to exclude from the Black Sea ; and that the real objection to the recent orders of the Porte in the Czar's eyes was that they prevented him from giving indirect countenance and assistance to the insurgents in Greece. Had this representation of Lord Strangford's been in every point correct, Lord Liverpool would have been disposed to acquiesce in Canning's views, and to abstain from any interference on this matter. As he wrote soon afterwards, " we must only look seriously, in this case, to the probability of a war between Russia and the Porte, and to the consequences of such a war. And I am perhaps more deeply impressed with this consideration from entertaining an opinion that the success of Russia in such a war is as certain as success can be in any war." But after a time it was ascertained that the inconveniences to which the Russian commerce was exposed were greater than Lord

Strangford had imagined; and the opinion which Lord Liverpool had at first expressed was acted on with entire success in every point of view. The Turks adopted our advice, and so modified their policy as to remove every ground of complaint on the part of the Russians; and, in all appearance, really felt their obligations to us for having enabled them to avoid a war with their formidable neighbour: nor could the Russians, though perhaps secretly sore at being less able than before to protect and assist the Greeks, refuse to express a similar gratitude towards us, since our conduct had thus been in precise conformity with their requests.

It has been mentioned that the royal speech at the opening of the session had congratulated the kingdom on the general and increasing prosperity of our trade; and a practical proof of the accuracy of the statement was supplied by the budget a fortnight afterwards, when the new Chancellor of the Exchequer announced a great reduction of taxation, amounting to nearly two millions and a quarter, and was nevertheless able to anticipate a surplus of revenue over expenditure to the amount of five millions. That the merit of these reductions was principally owing to Lord Liverpool himself is demonstrated by the following letter to Mr. Vansittart, the last he wrote to him on the office which he was on the point of quitting.

*Private and confidential.*

Coombe Wood, January 7th, 1823.

MY DEAR VANSITTART,

You will have heard from Hill a very satisfactory explanation of the deficiency in the assessed taxes. We may be relieved I think, therefore, of all apprehensions on this head.

I quite go along with you in all your calculations. If you are a bold man you will perhaps think me a bolder, in submitting for your consideration what I would not at present hint to any one, whether we could not go still further than you suggest. I set out with assuming that we should go to the utmost point to which we can go, as our own act, and then make our stand. I

am further impressed with the opinion that the best chance of saving our five millions' surplus is giving up whatever may exceed it.

We all hoped last year that the agricultural distress might in some degree diminish through some rise in the prices, but of this I do not think now there is the least chance, unless from an unfavorable season.

Supposing, then, the calculation to be true that, with the Austrian Loan, we shall have 10,100,000*l.* to dispose of, why could we not, in addition to a reduction of fifty per cent. on the assessed taxes, give up another million upon malt?

It would greatly relieve the barley countries, and would probably lead to such an increase in consumption as would make the loss far short of the calculation. I think, besides, that we may really risk a little if we do not give up our principle. We never did foresee such distress as actually does attach on one branch of the community, and it is the more severe upon them from its not affecting others.

Whatever final arrangements may hereafter be desirable, I am satisfied that it would be wasting our means as long as the agricultural distress continues, to apply our measure of relief to any class but the one that wants it.

I shall be in town to-morrow about eleven.

Believe me to be very sincerely yours,

LIVERPOOL.

At 5,000,000*l.* Mr. Robinson now proposed for the future to fix the Sinking Fund, and to devote it for the future religiously to the extinction of the debt. A few days before the meeting of Parliament this fund had been the subject of a correspondence between Lord Liverpool and Lord Grenville, who had forwarded to the minister an elaborate paper drawn up by his own hand, in which he had urged a further remission of taxation, and as a consequence of this recommendation a temporary suspension of the "application of the public revenue to that object;" not concealing that he should have preferred its entire discontinuance, on the ground that as a private trader may "almost

always find the increase of his trading capital a more profitable application of his annual savings than the paying off a debt bearing the current interest," so "the whole community, charged with a debt which bears thirty millions of interest, but having a capital whose annual return produces many times that sum," would find many ways of expending its annual savings more advantageously than the payment of its debt. Lord Grenville, however, had evidently not contemplated so prosperous a position of our affairs as should enable the Ministry at once to keep the Sinking Fund in operation and to remit taxes. Lord Liverpool, therefore, in fully explaining to him in the following letter the amount of relief from taxation which the Chancellor of the Exchequer found it practicable to afford, did away with the reason which had led him to urge the suspension of the Sinking Fund.

*Private.*

Fife House, 23d July, 1823.

MY DEAR LORD,

I have this morning received the favour of your letter with the enclosed paper on the Sinking Fund. I am most truly obliged to you for it, and will consider the contents of it with all possible attention.

I should not have thought it necessary to have returned so immediate an answer to your letter, if I had not been anxious to correct the misapprehension into which you have fallen, with many others, that a pamphlet lately published on the state of public affairs was written by Mr. Courtenay. I can assure you that it does not come from his pen, nor from that of any person in the confidence of Government.

Although the writer of it is evidently a decided friend of the Government, his opinions on various points of policy, domestic and foreign, are at variance with the principles on which the Government is acting; and this may be exemplified in no instance more strongly than in the different views entertained by the Government from those advanced by the author of the pamphlet, on the financial measures of the ensuing year.



We have certainly seen no reason for altering our opinion on the subject of the Sinking Fund ; but I can state to you in confidence that we find ourselves fortunately enabled to propose to Parliament a remission of three millions of taxes, without in any degree affecting the principal or amount of that fund as settled in 1819, and confirmed in the last session of Parliament.

I will in a few days send you a statement of the revenue, drawn up by a person who is not apt to err on the sanguine side of the question, by which it will appear that, according to our mode of stating the account, there will be in the year 1823 a surplus of income beyond expenditure of 7,200,000*l*.

This surplus would enable us, upon our own principle, to propose to remit permanently two millions of taxes, but we deem it to be preferable, under all the present circumstances, to submit the propriety of suspending fifty per cent. on the assessed taxes for the period of two years ; having no doubt that, in consequence of the proposed increase of the revenue, it will be practicable to make the suspension permanent at the close of that period, but leaving the question by this means in the power of Parliament, in case political events, or the increase of smuggling in some of the articles of excise, should render a different arrangement at that time expedient.

The proposal thus made will reduce the burthen of the assessed taxes to within half a million of what it was in the year 1792, and is a relief, I believe, far beyond the expectation of the country at large.

The whole amount of our direct taxes will not then exceed three millions, and it is not immaterial to observe that, on the three great necessities of life, candles, soap, and leather, the duties levied at this time do not exceed what they were in the reign of Queen Anne, and the tax upon salt is in course of being abrogated altogether.

The duties on spirits must in Ireland and Scotland, on political grounds, undergo a considerable reduction ; but it is the opinion of those who have examined the question that the revenue will not suffer in consequence.

In England these duties, and those on tobacco, are no subject of

complaint, and the reduction of these duties on the former would be rather unpopular than otherwise.

The duty on malt was during the war as high as 4*s.* 3*d.* a bushel, and it is now reduced to 2*s.* 6*d.* That upon tea is most heavy when compared with the prime cost of the article, but it is a very increasing revenue, and the reduction of it may therefore be postponed till some further opportunity.

I have forbore from entering, in this letter, on the subject of the Sinking Fund, because I am anxious to give the paper you have been so good as to send to me more consideration before I state to you what occurs to me upon it.

I will only say this much upon the present occasion, that I never have considered the Sinking Fund as increasing the wealth of the nation. Nor do I consider the National Debt as in any way impoverishing the nation at large. But, notwithstanding these admissions, I still feel the Sinking Fund to be of material benefit to the country, and I will at an early opportunity trouble you with the reasons on which this opinion is founded.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

Nor was Lord Grenville the only peer on whom the minister's arguments made an impression. There was indeed some difference of opinion as to the real amount of the surplus claimed by him and Mr. Robinson, which (as it arose in part from an arrangement which had been made for commuting the dead-weight, as the military and naval half-pay was called, for a fixed charge, to subsist for forty-five years) some contended ought not to be stated at more than three, instead of at five millions. But generally the Government scheme was received with general approval, and Lord Lansdowne, rising immediately after the speech in which Lord Liverpool had recommended the necessary enactments to the House, "could not refuse his assent to a bill by which it was intended for the first time to simplify the Sinking Fund, and place it on that true foundation on which alone it ought to rest, the surplus of revenue beyond the expenditure."

Another of Lord Liverpool's speeches, though very short, should not be passed over, from the additional evidence it supplies of his eagerness at all times to uphold and recommend the principles of free trade, at a time when they were scarcely acknowledged as sound in theory, much less as capable of being carried out in practice; and consequently of his being fully entitled to the chief merit of the commercial improvements which are generally attributed to his new colleague, Mr. Huskisson, but which in fact were not only countenanced and advocated, but most vigorously promoted, and in many instances first promulgated by the Prime Minister, enlightened beyond his age.

On the 3d of June Lord Harrowby presented petitions from the woollen manufacturers of Leeds and Huddersfield against the duties on foreign wool; and Lord Liverpool, having just pointed out that those who, when those duties were first imposed, had objected to them on the ground that they would be comparatively unproductive, had proved to be greatly mistaken, added that "though the duties produced 400,000*l.* yearly, he was quite willing to give up all that advantage to the revenue, provided the manufacturers would agree to the free exportation of wool; but so long as they objected to the one, he should not feel justified in giving up the other." The manufacturers, however, were only for free trade on one side, and the minister, feeling that things were not as yet ripe for an entire change of system, was contented for a while to leave the existing duties untouched.

It had become almost an invariable rule for the affairs of Ireland to be brought before Parliament in some shape or other. But this year the complaints of her advocates took a somewhat novel form in the wider expression given to them by the Duke of Devonshire, who, a little before the close of the session, invited the House of Lords to pass a resolution which, after reciting that "a general spirit of violence had for some time prevailed in Ireland, and that the Government had shown its opinion that extra-

ordinary powers were required for the protection of life and property," proceeded to affirm that "the magnitude and frequent recurrence of these evils induced a belief that there must exist some material defect in the state and administration of the laws and the system of the Government;" and in the speech in which the Duke endeavoured to recommend his proposal to his brother peers, he not only advanced the old complaint of the denial of Catholic emancipation and of the hardships arising from the system under which the tithe was collected in that country, calling also in general terms for "an abridgment of the power of that exclusively Protestant party who had so long and so shamefully ruled Ireland;" but also insinuated a charge against the judicial authorities by the vehemence with which he insisted on the necessity of "a just and impartial administration of the laws." The debate which ensued was long, and, as had already become usual in discussions on Ireland, desultory and unpractical: indeed the Duke of Devonshire himself had admitted that there was actually a bill in progress for remedying the most pressing grievance of which he complained, the tithe system. One speech, however, of a nobleman not only connected but intimately acquainted with Ireland, Lord Limerick, contained a remarkable assertion, which threw no small light on the real motives of the chief actors in the outrages to which the Duke had alluded. He said that "although an opinion was elsewhere entertained that the disorders in Ireland were caused by religious differences, he was convinced of the fallacy of that opinion. He was sure that the upper classes of Roman Catholics had no connection with the outrages committed. He was equally ready to acquit the priesthood, and he believed that the promoters as well as the actors in those disorders were altogether confined to the lower orders of the people. He had himself had interviews with two Captain Rocks<sup>1</sup> (for their lordships must

<sup>1</sup> Captain Rock was the *nom de guerre* assumed by the perpetrators of the outrages which had prevailed for some years throughout the



know that there were as many Captain Rocks as there were bands of rioters), and these persons had told him what their object was. These men avowed to him with perfect tranquillity that their first wish was to drive away the heretics and to take their property. This was the aim they had in view; and, until they had accomplished it, they assured him they would never be quiet." And Lord Liverpool, without expressly alluding to his statement, fully endorsed and corroborated it. "It was not," he said, "a combination against the Government, but against property in general, whether in the hands of Protestants or Catholics, and he believed that the exasperation of the people of Ireland against Catholic proprietors was in many instances even greater than against Protestant proprietors. In Connaught the disturbances had arisen from the unwillingness of the people to pay dues to their own priests; and in many other parts of Ireland the feeling was as strong as against the Protestant clergy." He opposed the Duke's resolution, as giving an entirely false notion of the system which had now for many years, certainly for nearly half a century, been pursued towards Ireland. He pointed with justifiable pride to the different enactments for the remedy of abuses which had been passed since he himself had been in office, though the real remedy for the evils which distracted Ireland was to be looked for not so much in new laws as in the diffusion of a better feeling. "The great object in which all parties ought to unite should be to infuse into Ireland English notions and English feelings, to establish a better feeling between the higher and the lower orders; for he must repeat that the evil arose from a disunion between the rich and the poor, and not from a disunion between the Government and the governed."

The Duke's resolutions were supported by but a small south-west of Ireland, and the threatening notices which were served on different proprietors, and often secretly affixed to the church doors, were signed "Captain Rock;" the rioters themselves assuming the name of Rockites.

minority, as could hardly fail to be the case when no one of the Opposition had any remedy to propose except that of Catholic emancipation, which the House had repeatedly rejected, and an alteration in the tithe system, which was already on the point of being effected. But even the complaints made of the existing tithe system referred to it as an agrarian, not a religious evil ; nor did any one venture to dispute the assertion of Lord Limerick and Lord Liverpool, that religion did not enter the least into the calculation of the chief perpetrators of the outrages which afflicted so large a portion of the country. It followed, of course, that it never entered into the head of any one to propose the spoliation of the Protestant Church as a step which would have the slightest effect in either remedying evils or allaying discontent.<sup>1</sup> That the moving cause of the outbreaks which have recently taken place is the same as Lord Limerick stated it to be then, a desire to wrest the land out of the hands of the existing owners, is still more plain now than it was then, from the openness with which many of the Fenian leaders have avowed it. It may be remarked, too, that even that feeling is at this day weaker among the Irish themselves than it was formerly, since the chief pro-

<sup>1</sup> The events of the last session of Parliament, and the prospect of the next, make it not inappropriate to extract the following sentences from Sir Robert Peel's Memoir, relating to the part which he himself had taken on Catholic emancipation. Vol. i. p. 3, he speaks of "those objects on the inviolable maintenance of which the friends and the opponents of Catholic emancipation were completely agreed : namely, the legislative union, and the Established Church in Ireland, as guaranteed by the Act of Union. The Relief Bill of Mr. Grattan, introduced in 1813, declared in its preamble that the Protestant Episcopal Church of England and Ireland was established *permanently and inviolably*; and that it would tend to promote the interest of the same, and to strengthen the free Constitution *of which it is an essential part*, if the disqualifications under which the Roman Catholics laboured were removed." It would not be easy to find a statesman more inclined to view the claims of his Roman Catholic countrymen with extreme favour than Mr. Grattan ; nor one disposed to extend with greater liberality to every class, all that that class had a right to demand.

moters of it are no longer even the lower classes of the resident Irish, but refugees who have deserted their native land, abjured their allegiance, and who only return to the country in transitory visits out of a general hatred of law and order, to excite disturbances the mischiefs of which they imagine cannot reach themselves. Yet while these facts are notorious, and when Fenianism itself has been by the power of the law and the vigour of the Administration reduced to insignificance and almost extinguished, statesmen can be misled by the restlessness of party animosity to seek to destroy what not only not one person at the time of which we are speaking complained of, but what Grattan, the most fearless, the most judicious, and the most honest champion that Ireland could ever boast, had not long before proclaimed to be not only void of offence but an "essential part of the free constitution of the kingdom."

The Tithe Bill, to which allusion has been made, was mainly founded on the principles laid down by Lord Liverpool in his letter of the preceding year, which has already been given.<sup>1</sup> It had passed the House of Commons by large majorities, and met with but little opposition when, at the beginning of July, he introduced it into the Upper House, recommending it as a tentative measure rather than as one altogether perfect, and expressing himself as quite prepared hereafter to make its operation compulsory if it should be found that the incumbents of benefices refused voluntarily to agree to the compositions which would be proposed under the Act. And it is a further illustration of the universality of the feeling to which I have before alluded, and which recognised the maintenance of the Church Establishment in Ireland as a paramount duty incumbent on all parties, that the Prime Minister especially urged the adoption of this bill, as one "which would strengthen instead of weakening the influence of that enlightened body, the resident clergy of the Establishment." For the advantage of their residence

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, p. 218.

in the country he ranked even above that of the residence of the landed proprietors, greatly as he deplored the mischiefs of absenteeism. Nor on this point did any one differ from the views which he expressed, though Lord Lansdowne, whose opinion as a great Irish landowner was entitled to peculiar respect on such a subject, would have preferred "a commutation of tithes by exchange for land."

The bill passed the Lords with but slight opposition, and a few days afterwards the Parliament was prorogued. On the whole, Lord Liverpool had ample reason to be satisfied with the general aspect of affairs. As he wrote in August to Canning, in reply to a flourishing description of the prosperity of Liverpool, "he had received corresponding accounts from most parts of the country, and he believed, indeed it might fairly be said, that Great Britain was never in such a state of internal welfare and content as at present." And as the autumn proceeded, this opinion was corroborated by reports from the Treasury, which proved that the relief to all the trading classes afforded by the late remission of taxation had been so beneficial that the revenue of the year had not been diminished by an amount at all equal to the reductions effected, but that a large surplus might be reckoned on.

The only cloud that disturbed the generally fair promise arose on the side of France, where not only the ministers, but many persons of influence unconnected with the Government, viewed some of our recent proceedings with unconcealed dissatisfaction; and Canning thought a letter which he received on the subject from a friend at that time residing in Paris of sufficient importance to forward a copy of the chief portion of it to Lord Liverpool:

*Extract from a letter to MR. CANNING.*

Paris, 13th October, 1823.

The discontent of the ministers with the British ministers is extreme; they speak of the measures they are pursuing as



meriting their highest resentment; that Russia and Austria participate in these sentiments, and that next spring will convince England of the power they possess to punish her.

My authority for the above, and also for what further I shall say upon this subject, is the Duc de Castries, and is the result of a conversation he had yesterday with the Count de Villèle, who added that it was the determination of the King's consul to retain possession of all the principal Spanish ports, and to use every effort to exclude British commerce from the Peninsula: that Portugal must of necessity follow the impulse. The Brazils by the spring would also be under the influence of France and her allies, and a year or two be sufficient to exclude the British from the whole of South America. This once accomplished, Great Britain must of necessity obey the decisions of the great continental council: that France and Spain being now one kingdom as to politics, would naturally take the lead in the decisions of the allied powers. Respecting the expenses incurred by France, it was useless to expect the repayment of them by Spain in any other manner than by the cession of a part of her American possessions, which was at this moment in arrangement, and was approved of by the allies of France. I think more was said, but the above is the principal. The Duc de Castries appears convinced that a great effort will be made to exclude Great Britain from the commerce, not only of the continent, but also from the Spanish colonies, who he is convinced will very soon be subjected to Spain; and that a French force will proceed out, not only for that purpose, but to take possession of the part that is to be ceded to France. He says that his son the Marquis, now in Spain with his regiment, will be appointed to a government in the ceded part. Should I obtain any further information upon this subject that I may consider authentic, I shall again trouble you with a communication; but, knowing how fully your time is occupied, I refrain writing upon the common subjects of the day, which any one will tell you. I therefore do not notice the exultation of the Ultras.

Canning did not give the name of the writer, but the statements which the letter contained as to the feelings of

those whose system and whose conduct he had so openly disapproved, could not surprise Lord Liverpool, still less could he feel alarmed at threats which it intimated as to their future policy. If Napoleon in the plenitude of his power had found himself unable to check the extension of our commerce, there was but little chance of the Bourbons being able to do so, when their kingdom was so far from being united that one of the motives which had led to their late attack on Spain had notoriously been the necessity of providing employment for the army, lest it should become unmanageable and perhaps even turn against them. To the cession of any of the Spanish settlements to France, whether in payment of her expenses in effecting Ferdinand's liberation, or on any other pretext, our ministers were determined not to consent; and the events of the next year showed that they had power enough and confidence enough in the national strength to carry out the policy on which they had resolved as called for by our own interests, and due to our own honour, without regard to the open threats or secret ill-will of less liberal and less clear-sighted statesmen of any foreign country.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

Prosperity of the year 1824—Improved condition of Ireland—Lord Liverpool's speech on the French invasion of Spain—Great majority in favour of the Ministry—Improvement in the condition of the slaves in our West Indian colonies—Encouragement of the silk trade—Lord Darnley's attack on the Ministers' Irish policy, and on the Irish Church—Excellence and popularity of the recent educational regulations in Ireland—Lord Liverpool supports Lord Lansdowne's Bill respecting the admissibility of the Roman Catholics to the magistracy, &c.—Reversal of old attainders—Canning dines with Lord Mayor Waithman—Lord Liverpool's encouragement of learning of every kind—Letter to Croker on Burke, Junius, &c.—Death of Louis XVIII.—Death of Alexander—Correspondence with Canning—Our policy with respect to the Spanish settlements in South America—Lord Wellesley's account of the state of Ireland—Rise of the Catholic Association.

THE year 1824 affords this conclusive evidence of the general welfare of the kingdom, that it furnishes the historian with few events to record. It is true that the Annual Register adduces, as one instance of the universality of prosperity, the fact that since 1822 the price of wheat had risen nearly 1*l.* a quarter: though, if such a rise was really a fortunate thing for the nation as a whole, it rather proves that there was some great defect in the principle of our corn laws. It may be true that wages had risen at the same time, and that employment was plentiful, so that the labouring classes could pay 3*l.* in 1824 even more easily than 2*l.* two years before.<sup>1</sup> But

<sup>1</sup> The price, as stated in the Annual Register for 1824 (vol. i.), is, "Wheat, which in 1822 afforded an average of only 43*s.* 3*d.* per quarter,

that cheapness of food could under any circumstances be considered an injury even to the producer, and that so prodigious a rise could be looked on as a general benefit, are conclusions not only startling, but so wholly unnatural, that at the present day it seems absolutely inconceivable how the mere statement that cheapness of food was to be deplored, and dearness of bread a thing for which to be thankful, did not at once awaken in our statesmen a doubt whether a system which led men to entertain such opinions could be otherwise than radically unsound. As yet, however, no one of any party conceived the possibility of abstaining from efforts to confine the price of grain within certain limits; and all conceived the perfection of legislation to be to secure the chief trade in corn to our own farmers, and at the same time to diminish the fluctuations to which the cost of an article depending on anything so variable as the seasons must inevitably be liable. On this question it cannot indeed be said that Lord Liverpool was in advance of his generation; though it is equally certain that he was in no respect behind it. And in fact when, in the last year of his Administration, measures were brought forward in relaxation of the existing laws, the bitterest opposition to them came not from the Tory side of the house, but from those who afterwards set up a claim (than which none ever had less foundation) to be considered as the enemies on principle of all monopolies, and especially of such as tended to raise the price of the food of the labouring class; but who, on that occasion, proclaimed as their chief boast their superior perception and advocacy of the interests of the farmer.

As it was, however, the speech from the throne at the opening of Parliament was in entire harmony with the general conviction when it alluded to the rise of prices with the statement that "agriculture was recovering from the

gave in 1823 an average of 51*s.* 9*d.*; and in 1824 the price increased so much that the average was 62*s.*



depression under which it had laboured." It spoke still more cheerfully of the steady extension of trade and commerce ; of the increasing activity which prevailed in every branch of our manufactures ; and, for the first time for many years, presented a cheering picture of Ireland, which was described as presenting "many indications of amendment." And these expressions of self-gratulation for the past, and confidence in the future, were accepted with something like complacency by Lord Lansdowne, as leader of the Opposition ; who, seeming to feel himself bound to discover some subject for cavil or objection in the speech, could find nothing more plausible to urge than the sentimental disappointment that the ministers "had not at the least stated whether the military occupation of Spain by France gave them satisfaction or not ;" that they had not "put into the mouth of their royal master, the sovereign of a free people, words expressive of regret at the violent subversion of the hitherto sound principle, the right of nations to govern themselves by a Constitution of their own choice." Lord Lansdowne's complaint, therefore, amounted to this. He not only admitted that the country was, in every material point affecting its internal welfare, prosperous and increasing in prosperity, but also that that prosperity "had been the result of the very excellent regulations which had recently been adopted ;" in other words, of the commercial and domestic policy of the Administration. But after we had, and though we had, protested against the French invasion of Spain in the most forcible and unmistakeable manner by the withdrawal of our plenipotentiary from the congress at which the intention to invade Spain was announced, he would have wished us to reiterate our vexation now that the thing was done ; he would have thought it becoming our national dignity for our King to come down to his Parliament with a peevish complaint that his advice had not been taken, that his remonstrance had been disregarded, and that, as far as could yet be seen, the vengeance of heaven had not very

conspicuously visited those who had been thus inattentive to our admonitions, and regardless of the dictates of international law.

The view taken by the Prime Minister of the course befitting our King and ourselves was widely different. He reminded the House that he had himself "never hesitated to declare that France had no right to invade Spain; disapproving of that interference, not on abstract principles of non-intervention, because he was aware that every general principle admitted of exceptions, but because France could make out no specific case which gave her any title to interfere with the internal regulations of Spain." And he pointed with justifiable self-satisfaction to the entire confirmation which the opinions he had expressed in the previous year with regard to the proper course for this kingdom to take had received from the events of the invasion. It had become quite clear "not only that the great majority of the Spanish people, but a majority so great as to surprise every one, hailed the French as friends and deliverers." And the conclusion which he desired his audience to infer was so obvious that he forbore to state it in express words. It was not more manifest that it was beneath our sovereign fretfully to complain of a thing having been done which, before it was done, he took no active step to prevent; than that, now that it had been made evident that what had been done had been approved by the Spaniards themselves, such a lamentation over it as Lord Lansdowne would have recommended would have been a profitless insult not only to the French, but to the Spaniards also. Not, indeed, that Lord Liverpool approved of the course which events had taken, or thought the results wise and beneficial for the Spanish nation. "The noble Marquis had stated that Ultraism had now been established in Spain. But by whom had that Ultraism been established? Not by the illustrious Prince who commanded the French army; for here he must say that, however much he had at first deprecated the invasion of Spain, he could not with-

hold his praise from the Duc d'Angoulême, whose wise, firm, and moderate conduct had been conspicuous during the whole campaign ; who, instead of encouraging Ultraism among the Spaniards, had done everything to check it ; and who gave promise, in that mission, of what might be expected of him when he should ascend the throne of his forefathers. The Ultraism complained of was the sentiment of the Spaniards, and not of the invaders ; and he had no more idea of sending British bayonets to make people free against their will than to enslave them against their will."

He proceeded to describe the views of the Government with respect to Spain's South American colonies. He reminded his brother peers that, as early as Buonaparte's first invasion of Spain, one party in Parliament had urged the Government, instead of sending an army to Spain, "to leave the ruler of France to do what he chose in that country, and to direct our efforts to the establishment of South American independence. Those who despaired of our success in Spain made no doubt that we could succeed in detaching from her the colonies which she then possessed, and therefore pressed the prosecution of this measure as our only rational policy. The Government, however, rejected that advice for this among other reasons, that our efforts, however successful, could not have led to the deliverance of Europe. But when the contest with Buonaparte was brought to a close, and the authority of Ferdinand restored, the state of the Spanish colonies, which during the continuance of the war had thrown off their allegiance, presented great difficulties. We then offered our mediation, not for the purpose of restoring those which had declared themselves independent, and were determined to maintain their independence, but for that of reconciling to the mother country those that were still willing to be reconciled. That mediation was rejected ; but, had it been accepted, Spain might have saved half her Transatlantic possessions. She had now seen all her colonies separated from her : and in the new situation in



which they were placed we had proceeded openly and frankly. Lord Lansdowne had said that we had taken the first step towards acknowledging their independence by sending consuls to them, and had asked what further steps were proposed to be taken. On this point the language of the speech was as explicit as at the moment it could be. It announced to the House, to the country, and to Europe, that we were wholly unfettered by engagements either to Spain or to our allies, and were perfectly free to take that course which prudence or policy might dictate. But, while he made this explicit declaration, he was free to confess that practical difficulties would present themselves in our relations or intercourse with those possessions until Spain should have renounced all claim to their obedience, and recognised that independence *de jure* which they enjoyed *de facto*. If a recognition of them, therefore, could be obtained from Spain herself, he should think it a great object gained; but this could hardly be expected, at least at present; and, in the mean time, we were not bound either by the concession or the refusal of Spain."

He forbore to mention, lest the making his invitation public before it could have reached those to whom it was addressed might seem to savour of indelicacy, and also of a wish in some degree to put a constraint upon them to compel its acceptance, that in the very week preceding the Foreign Secretary<sup>1</sup> had expressed to the Spanish Government the anxious desire entertained by our ministers that, for the sake of her own peace and her own dignity, Spain should take the lead in and set the example of recognising her old colonies as independent powers.

<sup>1</sup> This speech was delivered February 3. On January 30 Mr. Canning had forwarded a despatch to Sir W. A'Court, our ambassador at Madrid, expressing the desire of his Cabinet that "his Catholic Majesty should have the grace and the advantage of leading the way, in that recognition [of the independence of the South American States] among the powers of Europe." See the Despatch (Parliamentary Debates, x. 717, N. S.).



But a month later he laid the despatch in which the invitation had been conveyed on the table ; though, when Lord Lansdowne sought to build on it and on other papers from the French and Spanish courts which accompanied it, a motion for the completion in all its parts by ourselves of that recognition of which as yet we had taken only the first steps, he had no difficulty in resisting it, on the ground of the propriety of still giving the King of Spain further time for deliberation, and likewise of waiting for reports of the state of those countries from the consuls whom we had sent out. Such patience he considered our duty, "from which sound policy could never be separated : " and the House agreed with him by a most decisive majority,<sup>1</sup> looking on the question to be, as he put it to the Lords, "whether the Administration had proved itself so wrong in its views, and so injudicious in its policy, as to justify Parliament in taking out of the hands of the Crown the exercise of its undoubted prerogative."

As Lord Liverpool put it, the question was one of confidence in the foreign policy of the Cabinet ; the vote of the Peers was a most expressive declaration of that confidence : and so fully was the same feeling known to be shared by the House of Commons, that Sir James Mackintosh, who had given notice of a motion similar in its object to that of Lord Lansdowne, declined to risk a similar defeat, and withdrew it altogether. For a similar approbation of his domestic policy, in its most important or at all events its most difficult department, the treatment of Ireland, Lord Liverpool laid an equally solid foundation in the statement which he proceeded to make, and which he repeated later in the session, of the extreme benefit which had already been derived from the Tithe Bill recently passed, which had "succeeded beyond the most sanguine expectation which any person had ever formed respecting it."

He touched on one topic to which Lord Lansdowne

<sup>1</sup> The numbers were 95 to 34.

himself had not adverted, but which illustrated the vigilant energy with which the Government consulted the interests of every class in every part of the King's dominions. In 1823, the House of Commons, though declining to agree to a resolution proposed by Mr. Buxton, that "slavery ought to be abolished in the British colonies with as much expedition as might be found consistent with a due regard to the well-being of the parties concerned," had unanimously agreed to an amendment moved by Canning on the part of the Ministry, "that it was expedient to adopt effectual and decisive measures for ameliorating the condition of the slave population." The King's speech now assured Parliament that he had not been inattentive to the desire on that occasion expressed by the Commons : and the statement soon afterwards laid before the House by Lord Bathurst as Colonial Secretary explained the judicious and effectual steps which had already been taken with that object. The resolutions alluded to had only been passed by the House of Commons on the fifteenth of May ; but already the ministers had sent out instructions to the governors of the different colonies to "make provision for the religious instruction of the slaves, and (as an indispensable condition) to abolish Sunday markets ; to place the punishment of male slaves under regulations and restrictions, and to abolish altogether the practice of flogging women ; to facilitate and encourage the marriage of slaves, and to prevent the separation of husband and wife, and of the mother from her infant children in any sale of slaves ; to give them security for their property by establishing banks of deposit ; to establish facilities for their manumission ; and, finally, to make arrangements for allowing the evidence of slaves to be received in courts of justice." The most important parts of the speech in which Lord Bathurst made this announcement were those in which he explained, and commended our planters for the very superior treatment which their slaves received as contrasted with the system which prevailed



manufactured silks was absolutely prohibited : practically, he had not been protected at all, since the fabrics thus prohibited were in universal use, being smuggled into the country, it might almost be said without concealment : at all events with such absolute notoriety that, not long before, a member had taken a silk handkerchief from his pocket, with the announcement that it was contraband. To counterbalance this ineffectual protection, a very heavy duty was imposed on raw silk : while again, to counterbalance that disadvantage, bounties were given on the exportation of our silk manufactures. But this encouragement was as delusive as the prohibitory protection, since, in spite of the bounty, the French manufacturers undersold us. The result of the whole arrangement was, that our silk trade was in a very sickly condition. And to invigorate it the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his budget, proposed to substitute for the prohibition of foreign silks a duty of 30 per cent. on the value ; and to reduce the tax on raw silk, which, if imported from India had hitherto paid 4s., if from China or Italy 5s. 6d. ; to 3d. and 6d. : the two clauses taken together, being calculated, as the leading manufacturers conceived, to constitute a protection sufficient to enable them to compete with the French, our chief rivals in industry. On introducing the bill necessary to effect these changes into the House of Lords, after it had been passed by the Commons, Lord Liverpool recommended it on abstract principles of free trade ; which came from him with the greater force because, though he was, as has been pointed out more than once, generally speaking an advocate of such a system, yet he admitted that "he had formerly entertained doubts of the propriety of admitting a competition in certain manufactures. More mature consideration, however, had convinced him of the impolicy of any restrictions of any kind." And after laying down this general rule, he was able to advance in favour of the particular measure which he was advocating, the statement that it had already been received with such approval by



persons competent, through experience, to estimate its probable effects, that many of them "were preparing to establish silk manufactories in different parts of the country. In Manchester alone, arrangements for works of that kind were in progress which would give employment for nearly 40,000 individuals." Returning to the general principle, he affirmed that "the impolicy of prohibitions was now too obvious to be questioned;" and he even ventured to put forth an opinion which to old-fashioned politicians must have seemed one of almost unpatriotic liberality. "It was," he said, "to be expected that foreigners would at all times show a superiority over us in some branch of manufacture or other; and this was not to be regretted. It was not desirable that other countries should not improve as we improved; for such reciprocal improvement was advantageous to all countries." It is now indeed understood that competition is good for all the competitors, even for those who are defeated; that it is the parent of improvement, and that without such a stimulus art would stagnate, and genius itself be often misdirected or barren. But to put forward such a doctrine at that time was a proof both of originality and of hardihood; and not only did petitions flock in depreciating the intended change, but some even of the greatest authorities in the commercial world were loud in their prophecies of the mischief which must be its inevitable result.<sup>1</sup> Lord Lansdowne, however, avowed himself a willing follower of the minister on this subject; declaring his opinion that nothing could be more politic or more advantageous to the country. He saw, that the reduction of the duty on the raw material would be more than an equivalent for any loss (if indeed there were any loss whatever) that the manufacturer could possibly suffer from the cessation of absolute prohibition; and expressed

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Baring, for instance, probably the most opulent and influential member of that interest in the House of Commons, declared "his opinion was that those who proposed this new plan were completely ruining the silk manufacture of England."

a sanguine confidence that he would soon be able to maintain his place against any foreign rivalry. On all matters of commerce and finance there was now but one voice in the nation, that the country was enjoying great and increasing prosperity, and that it was in a high degree owing to the enlightened acuteness and resolute vigour of the Administration.

On one point only was their policy seriously impugned, though even in that instance its assailants encountered very decisive discomfiture. At the beginning of April Lord Darnley, in a motion for a committee to enquire into the state of Ireland, and the effects produced on that country by the recent legislation of Parliament, arraigned the whole system of their Irish policy; and his speech is especially remarkable as containing the first deliberate attack on the Establishment of the Irish Church. A passing denunciation of it had indeed been ventured on in the preceding year by Lord King in the Upper House, and by Mr. Hume in the Commons; but their speeches had scarcely attracted notice. But Lord Darnley now entered more minutely into the subject; not confining himself to an enumeration of the inconsistencies which he perceived, and of the evils which in his view arose from those inconsistencies, but proceeding also to a sketch of the mode in which he proposed to remedy them. He affirmed that "the establishment of the Protestant hierarchy in Ireland was more richly endowed than in England. It had four archbishops, and eighteen bishops; while at the same time some parishes were without a church, some without a single Churchman of the Establishment, and some without either the one or the other. Were not these facts," he asked, "sufficient to justify the assertion that in a general consideration of the affairs of Ireland the Church Establishment could not be omitted, and that it called imperiously for some more extensive scheme of regulation than a commutation or composition of tithes?" At the same time he carefully guarded himself against

being supposed "desirous of pulling down this sacred edifice, however out of proportion it might appear; or of appropriating any part of its wealth for any other purposes than those for which it was, in theory at least, originally intended: the religious instruction of the people." And though it was "not possible, on the present occasion, to enter into details," he explained his meaning to be that a portion of the revenues of the Established Church might equitably be devoted to the support of its rival. "He would state generally his conviction that the present estates of the Irish Church, if properly and rationally distributed and administered, would furnish ample provision for a Protestant hierarchy, better proportioned to the circumstances of the country; an adequate provision for a resident clergyman in every parish; and a fund for Roman Catholic priests and places of worship."

Such a suggestion was unstatesmanlike, because impracticable; since, however, opinions might vary on the question of endowing the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland it was quite certain that very few, even of those most favorable to such a measure, would at that time have consented to despoil the Established Church for such an object; and the futility of the plan proposed was so palpable that neither Lord Liverpool in his reply, nor Lord Lansdowne, who supported Lord Darnley's motion, took the slightest notice of it: though Lord Liverpool expressed his eagerness to promote education among the Roman Catholics as well as among Protestants; and pointed out that the steps which had already been taken with that object were beginning to produce valuable results. "The general schools, in which the benefits of education were extended equally to Catholic as well as Protestant since their establishment in 1817, had increased in manner which showed the importance which was attached to them by all ranks and classes. The Catholics were allowed to use the Douay version of the Scriptures when they desired to do so; in the appointment of master

no distinction had been made between Protestants and Catholics." And under this impartial system the schools were growing in favour with the people so rapidly that in the last four years the number of pupils had increased nearly fourfold; and it was gratifying also to learn that "in those districts where the system was most general the greatest improvement had been visible."

In one debate Lord Liverpool himself was on the side which was defeated, though it was so far from being a defeat of the Government that the Lord Chancellor voted in the majority. But it is especially worth notice, since the fact of the House of Lords by a considerable majority rejecting the advice of the Prime Minister, whose authority was usually so preponderating in their assembly, shows conclusively how great at this time would have been his difficulties if he had desired to carry a larger measure in favour of the Roman Catholics. Towards the end of May Lord Lansdowne introduced a couple of bills, one of which had been rejected in the preceding year by a very small majority under circumstances which led him to believe that it would now meet with less opposition. The first had for its object the conferring on the English Roman Catholics the elective franchise, which many years before had been granted to those in Ireland; the other proposed to open to them the magistracy and a variety of inferior offices, and to enable one distinguished adherent of the sect to discharge the duties of an office of which he could not be deprived, to permit the Duke of Norfolk to exercise the office of Earl Marshal of the kingdom, which had been made hereditary in his family, without incurring the penalties of a misdemeanour. Lord Liverpool not only voted for, but spoke for both the bills. Referring to the arguments adduced against them by Lord Eldon, he declared that "he did not yield to his learned friend on the woolsack in his zeal to maintain the Protestant Establishment, or the principle of the supremacy of the Crown; but the bills now before them involved only questions of degree. His



earliest friend hunted at indefinite dangers. He required something intelligible and tangible. He thought that in order to maintain the Protestant ascendancy, it was necessary to have a Protestant Parliament, a Protestant council, and Protestant judges. But it could not be denied that there was a wide distinction between such high securities and the privileges granted by the present bills. He even believed that the granting of such privileges to the Catholics of England would strengthen the Protestant Establishment, by removing a cause of discontent, and that by conceding these little things they should acquire strength to resist further encroachments. The fact that the elective franchise was enjoyed by the Roman Catholics in Ireland without danger and without mischief was at least a strong reason why the same concession should not excite alarm in England. In Ireland the proportion of Catholics to Protestants was infinitely greater, and therefore, if any danger existed, it must be proportionably augmented in that country. Surely such inconsistencies might be removed without endangering the Protestant Establishment, and without it at all following that they would be obliged afterwards to grant more. If he was afraid of anything, it was of prolonging useless contests on immaterial points, which made the Government appear weak without producing any countervailing advantage. His best ground of defence, when called on to cede what he considered material and essential, would be that, when a proper claim had been made out, he had met it fairly and fearlessly; and he thought that principle of conduct would be the most safe and honorable for the House."

There can be no doubt that in thus declining to waste his strength in stubbornly defending untenable and unimportant outposts Lord Liverpool was displaying the soundest practical wisdom; and it is equally characteristic of his outspoken manliness, of that remarkable candour for which, as we have seen, his most persevering antagonists always gave him credit, that he did not shrink from

avowing his object to be to make a stouter resistance when attacked on points which he regarded as more vital to the Constitution. But his reasoning, weighty as it was, had no influence on the main body of his usual followers. In a full House a majority of nearly 40 decided against both Lord Lansdowne's bills; and the minister was thus furnished with an additional reason for his resistance to the greater measure of emancipation, in the conviction that it would, as yet, have been impossible to induce the Peers to agree to it. They did indeed consent to pass a separate bill for the relief of the Duke of Norfolk: and then it was found that there was another obstacle in the way of a larger measure, for the King himself highly disapproved of it, and even hinted to the Chancellor that he might feel it his duty to refuse "to dispense with the oaths attached to that or to any other high office."<sup>1</sup> But, as even Lord Eldon saw no danger in an indulgence thus confined to a single individual, his Majesty waived his objections and the bill became law.

One bill that was passed this session was prompted by the minister's own kindly and moderate feelings. Just before the prorogation of the preceding year he had addressed the following letter to the King:

Fife House, June 30, 1823.

Lord Liverpool presents his humble duty to your Majesty, and has the honour of informing your Majesty that your Majesty's confidential servants, having had under their consideration the petitions and memorials presented to your Majesty from the families of the peers attainted on account of the rebellions of 1715 and 1745, venture to recommend to your Majesty to propose to Parliament to reverse the attainders in the cases of the male lineal descendants of the families which are now existing, and were on those occasions attainted. This would include at present only four cases: the Earl of Mar, Viscount Kenmure; Baron Strathallan, and Baron Nairn. The Earl of Carnwath

<sup>1</sup> Letter from the King to Lord Eldon; Twiss's *Life of Lord Eldon*, ii. 522.

may be eventually upon the same principle added to the list ; but he is at present in India, and has made no application.

If your Majesty should be graciously pleased to approve of the recommendation, your Majesty's confidential servants would humbly submit to your Majesty the justice and expediency of reversing the attainder in the family of Viscount Stafford. In offering this advice to your Majesty they are not actuated by any personal feelings towards the family which will receive the advantage, but by an anxious desire to make some reparation, however tardy, for one of the greatest acts of injustice recorded in our history.

The King willingly consented to the suggestion thus offered to him : which, it is fair to presume from the kindness which he had shown to the memory of the last Stuarts, was quite in harmony with his own feelings towards their adherents. But on one occasion Lord Liverpool had to pacify his Majesty on a matter which showed the singular and, we fear it must be said, petty way in which his Majesty was apt to notice trifles, and to nourish resentment even against the most insignificant individuals, if he fancied he had received any personal disrespect or contradiction from them. The Lord Mayor for the year was a linendraper of the name of Waithman, who had sought such notoriety as was within the reach of a London alderman by conduct which amounted to little short of encouragement of the rioters at the time of the Queen's funeral. So gross had been his misconduct that it had even been doubted by his ministers whether it would not be their duty to prosecute him for it ; and, though they eventually forbore to do so, his behaviour and language on one or two public occasions had been so improper that neither Lord Liverpool nor any of his colleagues would attend his inaugural dinner.<sup>1</sup> But, for some reason or

<sup>1</sup> " November 10, 1823.—At the Lord Mayor's dinner (Waithman Lord Mayor) none of the ministers attended. The Duke of Sussex, Lord Nugent, Sir James Mackintosh, Hume, Hobhouse, Grey, Bennet, &c. (all of them Opposition Members) were there."—Lord

other, Canning and Mr. Wynne chose to accept an invitation from him at Easter, though the rest of the Cabinet adhered to their former refusal;<sup>1</sup> and the King, who had not yet become entirely reconciled to Canning's presence at his Council Board, showed extreme indignation at his giving this open countenance to the factious city magistrate.

Windsor Castle, May 1st, 1824.

DEAR LORD LIVERPOOL,

I transmit you the enclosed for your serious and best consideration; I have sent a copy to the Duke of Wellington and Lord Bathurst, two personal friends both of my own and of yours, that they may in conjunction with yourself know my sentiments. I have been very ill, and am still unable to leave my bed. I am glad to hear that your own health is improved, and I hope that you have not returned to business prematurely.

I am glad that the arrangements for that worthy man the Dean of Hereford going to Chester are completed. You may be quite at ease about his pecuniary embarrassments.

I wish you would give the living of Brighton which now falls in to the Crown to the chaplain of our friend the Duke of Wellington. The gentleman's name is Driscoll, a most respectable and good orthodox clergyman. He was with the Duke during the whole of the war, and is therefore surely entitled to our consideration. I wish you to have the entire merit of this, as the Duke is very delicate upon the subject.

Your sincere friend,

G. R.

Colchester's Diary, iii. 305. From which entry it appears that the inaugural dinner in question was remarkable, not only for the absence of the Ministers, but as an Opposition gathering.

<sup>1</sup> It would seem, from Mr. Wynne's language, that the matter must have been the subject of some discussion. He writes to the Duke of Buckingham: "I mean to go on Monday to dine with Waithman at the Mansion House, partly because I think Canning right in going, though none of his other *confrères* go, and partly because Waithman is a Welshman. Canning is to excuse Liverpool on the ground of indisposition. Peel, Sidmouth, the Duke of Wellington, and others have gone out of town to avoid it."—Court of George IV. ii. 65.



*Paper enclosed with the preceding letter.*

Windsor Castle, May 1st, 1824.

The King very much regrets that the conduct of some of the members of his Government impels the King to communicate to Lord Liverpool his feelings upon this subject.

The appearance at the dinner of the Lord Mayor at the Mansion House of two of the members of the King's Government unquestionably calls for explanation.

The entertainment was that which belongs to the Lord Mayor himself, and not to the Corporation.

The public life of the individual filling the office of Chief Magistrate of the City of London has been marked by a continued series of insults to the Government, to the monarchy, and, above all, personally to the King himself. This is not matter of opinion, for several of his acts are on record, and are notorious to the world.

Mr. Canning could not be ignorant of this, and had also long known that his visit to the Mansion House would in the highest degree be offensive and personally disagreeable to the King; that, as Mr. Canning was there almost alone, his presence marked a difference of opinion and of conduct between the other members of the Cabinet and himself.

The King therefore thinks that he has just reason to complain, that in a case in which there was no official, or indeed any duty to be performed, and no necessity consequently existing, why the King's expressed wishes and his known feelings should have been so entirely disregarded.

The King desires to remind Lord Liverpool that when at his particular desire, and that of other members of the Cabinet, the King yielded to Mr. Canning's re-admission into the Government in the prominent situation which he now fills, the King consented to forget and to bury in oblivion all that had previously passed, and of which the King felt he had so much reason to complain.

The King is quite satisfied that he has since acted with the most uniform, condescending, conciliatory, and confidential kindness towards Mr. Canning. The King desires to observe the *return* is now before Lord Liverpool.

The King has always shown under all the fortuitous events that have happened an honest, steady, and sincere desire to preserve his present Government ; but the King owes it to himself and to his own honour to state that (notwithstanding the same desire exists) the King will never consent that his Government shall be degraded by such attempts to acquire popularity ; and, finally, whenever the King sees anything in the conduct of any member of his Government calculated to be injurious to the King's service, or personally offensive to his honour and feelings, the King will always feel it his duty frankly to declare it to his minister.

G. R.

That Lord Liverpool himself thought Canning's conduct injudicious is sufficiently proved by his own refusal to appear at the Mansion House either on this occasion or in November, when the presence of the ministers of the Crown at the civic banquet had been a rule almost invariably. But he also thought it beneath his Majesty to notice an act so plausibly defensible according to the usual practice. It was quite true that of late years the Corporation of the Metropolis had greatly fallen in public estimation. It was no longer constituted of the leading merchants of the City, but had fallen into the hands of men greatly inferior in position and character to those who a century before thought it an honour to be admitted to it; but, though the decay of its repute and influence was notorious, the ministers of the day, to which our party they might belong, had, as far as might be, ignored that decay, and had done their best to uphold its respectability in the eyes of the world. Lord Liverpool also was not without free from a belief that the presence of some members of the Administration at the dinner would prevent the introduction of topics, and the expression of opinions that might have proved embarrassing to the Government. How deep was his conviction of the propriety of this course! Canning's conduct had been so manifestly reprehensible, he called on the Duke of Devonshire to give notice of the

Cabinet who next to himself had the greatest weight with his Majesty, to aid him in framing a letter which should be at once an excuse for, and a defence of, Canning's conduct; and the following letter of apology was the joint work of himself and the Duke; the concluding sentences, which are by far the most humble, appearing (and it is a remarkable fact), not in the original draft by Lord Liverpool, but being added in the handwriting of the Duke :

Lord Liverpool has had the honour of receiving your Majesty's communication respecting the attendance of two of your Majesty's confidential servants at the entertainment at the Mansion House on Easter Monday.

Lord Liverpool was wholly unapprised of your Majesty having expressed any opinion as to the impropriety of your servants attending at the entertainment at Guildhall in the November preceding; but he feels it due to Mr. Canning and Mr. Wynne to state that he had informed them that he should have had no objection to have been present at the Mansion House if he had happened to be in town during Easter week.

Lord Liverpool entertained this opinion from what he recollected had been the sentiments and opinion of Mr. Pitt. It was his practice always to consider the Lord Mayor as a public officer, with as little reference as possible to his former political or personal conduct; and this he evinced on several important occasions.

No transaction in Mr. Pitt's political life ever affected his feelings so strongly as the proceedings in the House of Commons, and the subsequent conduct of the City of London in the case of Lord Melville; but immediately after the address presented to the Crown by the City on that occasion, though his own health would not permit his being present at the Mansion House at Easter, Lord Liverpool, as Secretary of State, and the Duke of Montrose went there at his desire, and thereby certainly prevented the expression of public sentiments which would indubitably have been manifested in the absence of any of the King's ministers, and might have been most inconvenient, if not

disastrous, at that period. Lord Liverpool will not compare the present times to those, but he is firmly persuaded that a marked compliment on the part of the meeting present to the deputies from South America and from Greece depended upon the presence or absence of the members of the King's Government; and that such a compliment under present circumstances would have been particularly embarrassing, especially if, as is customary, any of the Corps Diplomatique had been at the dinner.

Lord Liverpool will certainly feel it his duty to make known to Mr. Canning your Majesty's feelings and sentiments on this occurrence, and Lord Liverpool entertains a confident belief that Mr. Canning will regret as sincerely as Lord Liverpool that anything should have passed upon this occasion which could have given your Majesty a moment's pain.

Lord Liverpool can confidently assure your Majesty that it is the anxious desire of every one of your Majesty's servants to act in that manner which will be most conformable to your feelings; and for himself personally, Lord Liverpool humbly begs to say that it would be most painful to him if he were upon any occasion to be so unfortunate as to take a step of which your Majesty should feel there was reason to disapprove.

One proof of the political tranquillity of the year, and of the respite which it afforded the minister from his political anxieties, may be found in the circumstance that a large proportion of his correspondence of this year refers to matters wholly unconnected with politics. And it is a pleasing indication of his character that thirty years of official life had not in the least impaired the interest which, as we have seen, while a very young man, he took in every kind of learning and science. Of the following letters the first three will be read with interest by many, as affording an admirable specimen of true dignity in a man of most eminent attainments, not withheld by false shame from appealing to the minister of the Crown for aid in prosecuting his studies, nor led by equally false modesty to undervalue his own talents and his ability to benefit his



pupils; the second is valuable from the testimony it affords to the extreme conscientiousness with which, under the present chief of the Administration, the patronage of the Crown was dispensed; while the third justifies the confidence of both the Professor and his patron by the judicious zeal with which it expresses Lord Liverpool's eagerness to gratify both their expectations:

Dropmore, February 13th. 1824.

MY DEAR LORD,

As I have not the smallest claim, so I trust you know how far I am from having the disposition, to trouble you with solicitations in the exercise of your official patronage. It would be perfectly unfit for me to do so, knowing as I do the inadequacy of your opportunities to satisfy the numerous applications of that nature with which you are harassed, and being myself wholly withdrawn from public life, and consequently unable to make the slightest return for any favour of that description.

I beg you, therefore, not to consider the trouble I am now giving you at all in that light. I am discharging, as I feel myself bound to do, a public and official duty; and if, instead of the warm wishes I entertain for the success of your Government, I had still found myself now, as formerly, opposed to it, I should equally have ventured on the liberty of transmitting to you the enclosed letter, relying on your justice and liberality for giving to such a step, taken under such circumstances, its true interpretation.

It is as Chancellor of Oxford, and as addressing a minister to whom, I am confident, no man can refuse the high praise of a more than ordinary attention to the interests of the Church, and of the Universities so closely connected with it, that I think myself bound to bear the fullest testimony to the accuracy of Professor Buckland's statement, and to the importance of the services which he has rendered, and is daily more and more rendering, to the cause of religion and of science. I think you will not differ from me in considering it a matter of very great public interest that the means should, if possible, be provided of keeping him at Oxford, where he is so much better placed than he could be in any private station for promoting

and extending the science of which he may without exaggeration be considered as almost the author, and for inspiring and spreading a taste and disposition for it, which in so many points of view is likely to be of so much public benefit.

On the other hand, you will certainly feel that what he says of his own present situation and prospects is not stated with any unreasonable view of self-interest, but in a just appreciation of what he is, and what he has shown himself capable of having done in any other line to which he had devoted his talents.

But these things are too obvious for me to detain you upon them. It was my duty to say what I have upon them. What can be done upon them you best know, and I am very much persuaded of your disposition to do whatever may really be practicable.

Ever, my dear Lord,

Most faithfully yours,

GRENVILLE.

*Enclosure.*

MY LORD,

It is not without the advice of the Chancellor of the University and its late representative, Lord Stowell, that I venture to address your Lordship on a subject which my friends are pleased to consider of public importance, namely, my future prospects with respect to residence in Oxford. and my continuing to discharge the duties of the situations I there hold, and to which it is my most ardent wish to devote the remainder of my life.

When his Majesty was pleased some years ago to attach a salary of 100*l.* per annum to these offices, I foresaw the inadequacy of any emoluments that could arise from them to meet the expenses that would inevitably attend my prosecution of a science which had yet to be created, and in which, besides the necessary costs of perpetual travelling, the purchase of every article essential to his lectures and to the formation of the collection, would fall almost exclusively on the Professor of the new and infant science of geology; and the result has been, as I anticipated, that I now find myself, at the age of forty, with no other prospect before me than that of shortly retiring to provincial obscurity on a college living, where all the attain-

ments I have made in a department almost peculiar to myself will be completely thrown away. Meantime I have foregone the profitable employments of Oxford tuition for a public service in which I have expended every farthing I have ever become possessed of.

It becomes not me to speak or judge of the value of my own exertions to the public or the University. I have pursued them hitherto with ardour, and it is my earnest wish to devote the remainder of my days to what I am sure is the most useful service in which I can be employed in the world ; but the time of life is now come when I must soon cease to be a Fellow of a college, and, I fear, for ever abandon my pursuits and lectures in the University, from the want of means to enable me to continue my residence there.

I am fully aware, my Lord, I have not the smallest pretensions to ask any personal favour at your Lordship's hands, nor do I now presume to do so ; and, in venturing to lay before your Lordship this statement of my situation, I trust I am influenced by no other motive than the hope that it may be in your Lordship's power to prevent my removal from the public duties of a situation to which I have devoted, and wish to continue to devote, the best exertions of my life ; a hope in which I am encouraged by the assurance I have of the regard your Lordship feels for the interests of the University of Oxford, and of those who exert themselves with reputation in the discharge of its public duties.

I have the honour to be, my Lord,

Your much obliged and devoted humble servant,

WILLIAM BUCKLAND.

Fife House, February 19th, 1824.

MY DEAR LORD,

I received, a few days ago, the favour of your letter with the enclosure from Professor Buckland. I can assure you that no one can be more deeply impressed than I am with the value of his services in the particular and important department of science of which, as you justly say, he may be considered almost as the founder ; and how desirable it must be to retain

him at Oxford, and afford him the means of prosecuting those enquiries in which he is now engaged.

It is obvious, I think, that this end would be best answered by his becoming a Canon of Christ Church; and I should not have the least difficulty in recommending him to the King for this preferment at the earliest opportunity, if it did not happen that I was under an engagement to the friends of another gentleman in the University for the next vacancy.

As I conceive you must be aware of the circumstance to which I refer, you will be the best judge how far this claim could be postponed for the important object of promoting and, I may add, of rewarding Professor Buckland.

If this, however, should be felt to be impracticable, I have only to say that I will do what I can for him whenever it is in my power; but I wish you would consider whether, as parochial preferment is quite inapplicable to the case, and as cathedral preferment is subject to so many difficulties from the public and personal claims to which it is liable, the purpose might not be accomplished in this instance by the grant of a small pension to the individual, not to the office.

In making this suggestion, I am not in a condition to give effect to it immediately, but I think I should see my way to it at an earlier period than I could look forward to any other arrangement; and I should feel such an appropriation of the bounty of the Crown perfectly justifiable on public principles, as well on account of the services which have been rendered as of the expense to which the individual had been exposed in the course of rendering them.

As I understand you are come to town, I shall hope to have an opportunity of conversing with you more fully upon this subject; and I think it would be better that you should say nothing on the last suggestion till after I have seen you.

I shall write a few lines to Professor Buckland myself in answer to his letter; and you may assure him, with perfect truth, that I am most favorably disposed towards him, and that whatever difficulties may stand in the way of the accomplishment of his wishes, I have every desire to overcome them.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.



Another letter shows that the writer needed no prompting to do honour to those who by their studies and labours have themselves done honour to their country by conferring benefits on it and the whole world :

Fife House, June 16th, 1824.

Lord Liverpool has the honour to inform your Majesty that a strong desire has been expressed by all the persons connected with science, and likewise by many members of both Houses of Parliament, that a public mark of respect should be paid to the memory of the late Mr. Watt (by the erection of a monument in one of our cathedrals) as the inventor of the steam-engine, the greatest and most useful invention of modern times.

Lord Liverpool is deeply impressed with the propriety of the suggestion, and a meeting is to be held on Friday for the purpose, which Lord Liverpool has promised to attend.

Lord Liverpool would humbly request your Majesty's permission to subscribe out of the funds at the disposal of your Majesty's Treasury the sum of five hundred pounds towards this object. He is persuaded that such a subscription in the name of your Majesty will be most gratefully received, as an additional proof of the encouragement your Majesty is always ready to afford to the important interests of science and literature.

A letter to Croker, the Secretary to the Admiralty, but better known as an essayist and reviewer of great industry and acuteness, is itself a piece of criticism on two or three books of standard popularity. The estimate of Burke's position in Parliament and his party comes with great weight from one whose long experience made him one of the soundest judges possible of the relations subsisting between a party and its leader, and of the qualifications indispensable to enable any statesman to attain and retain so proud a position ; while, in considering Lord Liverpool's description of Burke's powers and influence as an orator, we must remember that he himself had been, though in but a slight degree, his contemporary ; had sat in Parliament with him, and had more than once heard him speak

on topics which afforded ample scope for the display of all his excellences and all his defects, and unequalled excitement for his untiring energies. The comment on Junius is curious for the comparison which it mentions between Lord George Sackville and Windham; and in which, as he quotes it without comment, he probably coincided. To a later generation few men would seem to have been more unlike. Both were undoubtedly men of ability: but Lord George was more decided and original in his political views; Windham not only borrowed his opinions from Burke, but followed him also in no little of his extravagance with regard to the conduct to be pursued towards France; and, though a member of Pitt's Ministry, would, in deference to his old teacher, have had him refuse all terms of peace with a Republican Government. In truth, for his reputation and position in the House of Commons he was greatly indebted to his personal amiability, high sense of honour, and unvarying good temper: the very qualities in which Lord George Sackville was most deficient; for there can be little doubt that his conduct at Minden, which covered him with such merited obloquy, was a sacrifice of professional honour and duty to mere ill-temper, and in no degree proceeded from cowardice.

The opinion to which the letter alludes, that Lord George was Junius, may seem to detract a little from the acuteness which has been attributed to Croker; since not only is it as certain as circumstantial evidence can make it that Francis<sup>1</sup> was the writer, but the reasons given

<sup>1</sup> It may not be out of place to express, in a note, an opinion that these celebrated letters are more overrated than almost any work in our language: and that they owe the chief part of their reputation, partly to the unscrupulousness with which they attacked men in office by name, a practice then new and almost unheard of; and still more to the mystery with which their authorship was surrounded. Many of them are certainly written with considerable power, but others are distinguished neither by forcible reasoning nor accuracy of statement; while many of the most quoted passages are, when

by Lord Liverpool to prove that Lord George was not, and which are irresistible to any one acquainted with the history of the time, were as much within reach of Croker as of Lord Liverpool himself.

Walmer Castle, October 21st, 1824.

MY DEAR SIR,

I shall be happy to receive, and look over, the sheets of Walpole's Letters as it may be convenient to you to send them.

I am surprised, after the Dedication,<sup>1</sup> that you have no personal knowledge of Mr. Prior. I agree with you that his style is in many respects full of errors, and even of barbarisms; but I think it a most valuable addition to our biography, and every person to whom I have recommended it concurs in this opinion. There is real *mind* in the book, and some originality of thinking. Now any drayman could have written as good a life of a public man, with the advantage of the letters and the parliamentary debates, as my old friend the Bishop of Winchester has written of Mr. Pitt. The only defects in Prior's work as a piece of history are the following:

He makes Burke more the leader of a party in the House of Commons than he ever was. He was undoubtedly the oracle of the Marquis of Rockingham and of all the *pure Rockingham party*; but the House of Commons never did, nor ever would, have submitted to him as a leader of any party, and this his best friends knew. Prior has likewise too much overlooked his defects. Why, it may be asked, being gifted with acquirements beyond all other men, perhaps, living or dead, and surpassing all his cotemporaries in the *highest flights* of eloquence, was he not the leader of his party? First, because he

examined, very feeble. To take one instance: there has, perhaps, been no sentence more frequently cited as a specimen of severe sarcasm than his description of Wedderburne, as one whom "even treachery could not trust." Even Lord Campbell mentions it as a most stinging epigram. A very little reflection would have shown him that it was absolute nonsense. The very last qualification which one would ascribe to treachery is a proneness to trust others. Honesty is unsuspicious, but treachery, judging of others by itself, dares confide in no one.

<sup>1</sup> Prior's "Life of Burke" is dedicated to Croker himself.

wanted taste ; and secondly, because he was the most impracticable of men. He never knew when not to speak. He never knew when to speak short. He never consulted the feelings and prejudices of his audience. I remember hearing Lord Thurlow say of him and Fox, that the difference between them during the American controversy was, that Fox always spoke to the House, and Burke spoke as if he was speaking to himself.

The pamphlet to which you allude, a sketch of the life of George III. from 1780 to 1790, I conclude I must have seen at the time, but I have forgot it.

I cannot agree with you in the opinion that Lord George Sackville was the author of Junius. I am quite satisfied that he was incapable of being so ; and even his political life does not correspond at all with the real opinions of Junius.

The only *clear fact* as to Junius is, that he must have been a friend of Mr. Grenville's, and under some considerable obligation to him or to his family.

Mr. Grenville is the only public man whom Junius really protects. If he had not had some particular or mysterious connection with him, he would have been one of those whom he would have most abused. I have heard Lord Grenville say more than once that he knew a great deal about it, but that he never could tell what he knew.

Lord George Sackville was in decided opposition to Mr. Grenville's Government. The party that took him up after his disgrace was the Rockinghams. They restored him to the Privy Council upon their coming into office in 1765. He continued in Opposition after they went out in the following year, till the troubles in America took a decided turn. He then took a line of his own, and threw out some ideas respecting America which happened to hit the feelings of the House ; and it is a most singular fact, that this very individual, who had been condemned by a court-martial for cowardice, and struck out of the Privy Council, was appointed War Secretary of State to conduct the American War, with the acclamation of a great majority of the House of Commons. I have heard persons who remembered the transactions of both times say, that his station in the House of Commons in 1774 and 1775 was very much the same



as Windham's was in 1792 and 1793 at the beginning of the French revolutionary war.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

The last weeks of the summer brought with them an event which was at once seen to be not unlikely to be followed by considerable changes in the country in which it occurred; and which in fact did lead to such an issue, though less immediately than many foreboded. On the 16th of September Louis XVIII. died, and was succeeded by his brother, Charles X., previously known as the Comte d'Artois. The occurrence had been expected for some time; but, when it took place, Lord Liverpool thought it of sufficient importance to require him to hasten at once to London to discuss its character and probable consequences in a personal interview with the King. And he reported the result of his conference to Canning, who was in the country.

Fife House, September 21st, 1824.

MY DEAR CANNING,

I received this morning your letter of the 18th, and I have since seen the King.

I thought it right to come up to town, as I did not know what had passed between his Majesty and you with respect to what it would be necessary should be done upon the death of the King of France; and I was anxious that he should not take any false impressions, and above all that he should not commit himself before he had seen you or me.

I am happy to say that all is just as it should be. What appears to be immediately necessary will be done to-night, and the rest may stand over without inconvenience till your return on Sunday or Monday next.

Upon the death of George III., all the great Powers sent special missions of condolence to our King. This is of course the precedent which we ought to follow, more particularly in the present instance; for it is scarcely necessary to say that on the occasion of the first accession to the throne of France since

the restoration it would be desirable to do *rather* too much than too little.

It appeared to me besides highly expedient, that, considering the former personal connection of Charles X. with this country, our King should confer upon him the Order of the Garter ; and if this is to be done (in which the King most entirely concurs) it is very desirable that it should be done, or at least be announced as to be done, before any of the other great Powers have taken measures of the same nature.

I have settled with the King that Planta shall write a private letter to Sir Charles Stuart to-night, to say that a special mission will be sent, that he might communicate this to Monsieur de Villèle, but that all details must be deferred till your return to town, which was expected in a few days.

I did not say a single word to the King as to the nature and extent of the special mission, nor as to the person to be employed upon it ; nor did he say anything himself upon either of these heads. He quite concurred in the propriety of reserving these points till you came back.

I will now state to you what has occurred to me upon this part of the subject.

If the mission is to be in any degree political, I think it would be better that you should go than any other minister, but I doubt the policy of giving it this character.

Diverging as our policy does on so many points, but more especially respecting South America, from that of the other great Powers, the arrival at Paris of any minister of ours, but particularly of a Secretary of State on such an occasion, would create alarm amongst all the other missions and their respective Governments. And the very circumstance of the alarm might embarrass the French Government, and render them less disposed to be open and explicit with us than they might be through Granville, or through any other ambassador in whom they knew you and the Government had implicit confidence.

Independently, however, of this consideration, I do not think any good likely to result from such a communication which would compensate the objection to it, state that objection as low you please.

The main question for France to consider in her foreign policy

at this moment, is, whether she shall incline to Russia or to this country.

I believe her interest to be to incline to this country, and I believe further this to be Villèle's opinion, but he dare not act upon it. He is afraid of the Allies. He is afraid of the ultra-Royalists, who revolt at our limitations to the principle of legitimacy, and he is afraid perhaps still more of the public opinion in France, which at all times, but more especially since 1815, is hostile to England.

I have no expectation, therefore, that France will play any game which is not shuffling and ambiguous, and I think she may be led more into our views of policy by caution on our part, and by our not appearing to court her too much, than by any step which would peculiarly excite attention, and create jealousy either at home or abroad.

If you should determine upon not going, no one could be more proper than Granville, but then he would not go from *hence*. The most natural person would be the Duke of Montrose, or the King's Lord Chamberlain, but he is now in Scotland, and the passage from Dover to Calais might give him a severe fit of the gout.

Planter will tell you the other names which have occurred to me.

I should prefer Lord Pembroke; he would be highly acceptable to the King of France, and would, I think, be flattered by the offer.

As I have done all my business, and am anxious to get back to Walmer, I shall leave London to-morrow evening.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

Lord Liverpool's great desire was that what had happened should be as much as possible limited to a change of the person of the reigning sovereign: at all events, that there should be no conspicuous change of system. And the knowledge of his sentiments, which it was easy to contrive should reach the new sovereign, had such weight that no alterations were made at first in the Administration, though the bigoted subservience of Charles to his priestly advisers could not be long concealed. The reliance on M. de Villèle's preference for this country over Russia expressed in the

above letter was verified by the result, to which in all probability the unexpected death of Alexander a year afterwards contributed ; since the new Emperor, though a far abler man, was less known to the French ministers than his brother ; and his views upon Turkey led him rather to a willingness to unite with France and ourselves against her : so that the first great political action in which either France or Russia was concerned was the treaty between them which led to the battle of Navarino. Lord Liverpool himself had ceased to govern before that league was concluded, and during the remainder of his administration no cause of uneasiness was afforded him by the conduct of the statesmen of either country ; but his letters to Canning at this time show the constant vigilance with which he watched the proceedings of other nations, enabling him at all times to aid his brilliant colleague with advice, and, when assailed in Parliament, to support him by an expression of long-considered opinion. The first and second of the following letters prove how friendly to the real interests of Russia he was, even while most alive to and jealous of the grasping and treacherous system of her Emperor ; and are also interesting as showing how early suspicions were entertained by our statesmen of Russia having formed designs upon our Indian empire : while the last proves the importance which the writer attached to the final result of the struggle between Spain and her colonies, and the eagerness of his resolution to afford the colonists the most convincing proof of British sympathy by concluding treaties with them which would not only be a first step of recognition, but would, in fact, be tantamount to a complete acknowledgment of their success.

*Private.*

Walmer Castle, August 18th, 1824.

MY DEAR CANNING,

I return the enclosed papers. . . . The point most deserving of attention and consideration is the supposed views of Russia respecting India. I think it by no means probable that Russia



would engage in such a project unless a war with this country could arise upon other grounds: but I think it very possible that I should may have contemplated an attack upon our Indian empire as a means of war, if from other causes war should hereafter ensue between the two countries: and it might be very desirable that we should procure the information which would be necessary to apprise us what would be the facilities or difficulties of such an undertaking. If you had an opportunity of speaking confidentially to the Quartermaster-General, Sir W. Gordon, he would be the person best qualified to procure, or to put us in the way of procuring, the most valuable information upon this subject . . . . .

Ever sincerely yours,

LIVERPOOL.

*Private.*

Walmer Castle, November 3d, 1824.

MY DEAR CANNING,

I have read the supplementary memorandum respecting Greece, which I received from you this morning. It makes no alteration in the opinion I intimated in my letter of yesterday. There is one point only upon which I wish to add a few words.

If we can agree upon any terms of mediation, I think they should be proposed by the Allies conjointly, and not by Russia alone. This is the best chance of avoiding war, and even of protecting the Emperor of Russia in his opposition to the war party in his dominions, if he is really sincere in his desire to preserve peace.

It is besides more likely to be successful with the Porte than if the mediation was directly Russian, and it appears naturally to grow out of the Conference; the Allies as a body being more interested than any contiguous Power is capable of being.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

*Private.*

Walmer Castle, October 24th, 1824.

MY DEAR CANNING,

I do not see how we can take any decisive step as to Mexico till after our meeting in the beginning of December. You might say as much to Michelana, and as a further reason add that we were waiting for reports from Morier. It is impossible to say

what will be the state of our information at that time. As at present informed, I should be for making the proposition to Spain, and if (as there can be no doubt) Spain declined it, then to conclude a commercial treaty with Mexico, which would be the *first step of recognition*, and completely conformable to the line we have already taken with Buenos Ayres.

I wish we could hear from Peru. My fears are that Bolivar has failed, and that the Royalists are in considerable force in those provinces. This throws us back, not merely as to Peru, but as to the whole question.

If the Columbians had left the Peruvians to themselves the question would not have been so difficult ; but, by engaging in the contest in Peru, the Columbians admit that their success in that quarter is necessary, in a great degree, to the security of their own independence. It is useless, however, to speculate on these matters without more information than we now possess.

Ever truly yours,

LIVERPOOL.

Before the end of the year a Cabinet was held for the express purpose of coming to a decision whether, in our treatment of the revolted colonies of Spain, we were bound to consider "the wishes and opinions of Spain," or anything but the "existing situation of the colonies themselves, external and internal, and our own interests ;" and whether it was necessary, or could be required of us, to shape our conduct by "a reference to the feelings of the Continental allied Powers." Such anxiety did Lord Liverpool feel that the determination to be taken should be unanimous, that he drew up with his own hand a most elaborate paper, containing a complete history of the question from the beginning, with a statement of the reasons which seemed to him unanswerable for making the recognition, which all saw must sooner or later be given, immediate.

*Memorandum by Lord Liverpool.*

The period is now arrived when it appears to be necessary to review the state of our relations with the provinces of Spanish

America, and to consider the language which it may be proper to recommend to the King to hold on this important subject in his speech to Parliament, as well as the explanations which the ministers may be authorised to give whenever the question of the Spanish colonies shall become matter of debate in the Houses of Lords and Commons.

The first step towards political recognition has already been taken with respect to the State of Buenos Ayres. The result of it depends upon circumstances upon which we have not as yet sufficient information ; but a discretion has been vested in our agent, Mr. Parish, to act according to contingencies specified in his instructions.

Before we enter upon the question how far the time and circumstances are such as to make the recognition of the other states of Spanish America (but more particularly those of Mexico and Columbia) expedient and necessary, it may be desirable to make some general observations upon the past and present condition of those countries.

It is material to begin with remarking that there was nothing of a revolutionary character in the measures which were first taken in the Spanish American provinces in 1808, and which have led to the separation of the greater part of them from the mother country. When Napoleon Buonaparte attempted to impose his brother Joseph upon the Spanish monarchy, he looked to that monarchy in all its parts, as well in America as in Europe. It cannot be denied that in some parts of the Spanish American colonies a disposition to independence had manifested itself previous to the above period. As these colonies increased in population, in wealth, in knowledge, and in consequence, the bondage and monopoly imposed upon them by the mother country became more and more grievous ; and it is probable that in any case Spain must have made up her mind to lose them as dependencies, unless her Government had been disposed to adopt towards them a more enlightened policy, both commercial and political, in the place of one no longer applicable to their situation.

Far, however, from taking an ungenerous advantage of the difficulties in which Spain was involved to extort concessions long solicited in vain, the provinces of America, generally speaking,

with the exception perhaps of some portion of the territory now constituting the State of Columbia, professed to preserve their allegiance to Ferdinand VII., and were almost as enthusiastic in upholding his rights as the inhabitants of the mother country itself.

Even when the local governments established in Spain during the war and the captivity of the King, under the names of "Supreme Junta," "Cortes," &c. could not be persuaded to act towards the colonies upon any other principles than those of the old system, they nevertheless considered the cause of the King as separate from that of the local and provisional governments, and, upon his Majesty's restoration, most of them, for some years afterwards, not only carried on the Government in his name, but were desirous of coming to a cordial and sincere understanding with him. It could hardly be expected that they would submit again to the restrictions and oppressions to which they had formerly been subject, and from which they had been delivered, not by rebellion, but by the course of events and through the assertion of the rights of their sovereign. Upon this occasion it was that the Government of Great Britain offered its mediation, an offer since repeated many times, but never accepted by Spain otherwise than for the purpose of defeating or evading it.

There can be little doubt that at that period the connection between the King of Spain and all the South American provinces might have been re-established and secured;<sup>1</sup> and even at a subsequent period, when matters had gone too far in some of the provinces to make a reconciliation easy, Mr. Rush, the Minister of the United States, gave it as his opinion, and, it is presumed, as the opinion of his Government, to the late Lord Londonderry that, by prudent concessions and arrangements, the King of Spain might still secure the possession of more than two-thirds of his American dominions.

It is, therefore, to the injustice, and to the rigid and inflexible

<sup>1</sup> Periods at which the several states of Spanish America ceased to acknowledge the nominal sovereignty of Ferdinand VII.: Mexico, 18th May, 1822; Columbia (generally), 30th August, 1821; Venezuela, 5th July, 1811; New Granada, 17th December, 1819; Buenos Ayres, 19th July, 1816; Chili, 1st January, 1818; Peru, 15th July, 1821.



obstinacy of the Spanish Court and nation that the loss of their dominions is to be ascribed. The inhabitants had no desire in the first instance but to reconcile their allegiance to their King with their vital and essential interests. The greater part of them have been driven by circumstances into a situation in which they had no alternative but the declaration of their independence; and it would surely be impossible to place ourselves in their situation, and to say we should have acted substantially otherwise than they have done.

Except perhaps in the single instance of Columbia, it is manifestly not by choice that these states have adopted republican forms of government. Mexico has always been inclined to monarchy, and the others appear to have been driven to adopt the form of a commonwealth rather by circumstances than by any abstract preference for that sort of government.

Such being the character of the revolution which has separated these provinces from Spain, the question which forces itself upon our consideration is this: Are there any circumstances extrinsic to this internal character which should longer delay the recognition of the independence of such of those states as have established their independence *de facto*, and have constituted governments capable of maintaining relations of peace and amity with other Powers?

First, let it be considered that the provinces of Spanish America (combined with the Brazils) constitute more than one-fourth of the habitable globe. Is it possible to leave so large a part of the world for any length of time in a state of *outlawry*? If we were of opinion that it was practicable that Spain should reconquer her colonies (an opinion which it is utterly impossible to maintain), still, unless this be done soon, their independence must be acknowledged by those who are in a state to have communication with them.

Let any one reflect on the numerous questions in peace, and the still more numerous questions in war, on which foreign states have a right to expect redress, but on which redress can only be obtained upon the acknowledgment of the authority from which it is demanded, and he will find that he must infallibly be brought to this conclusion.

But, secondly, let us consider that these states can in fact *force*

their recognition by Great Britain, whenever they may deem it expedient. The Government of the United States of America have already acknowledged them. Suppose the new states were to impose high and exclusive duties upon the ships and commerce of all Powers resorting to their ports which did not acknowledge them, will any one say that they would not be perfectly justified after a reasonable interval in taking such a measure? Will it be pretended that the Government of this country could in such case long delay their recognition, considering the great interests we have at stake in that quarter, and considering that, in fact, not only the great bulk of external commerce, but even the internal operations of mining, and even of agriculture, are carried on principally by British enterprise and British capital?

The consequences of our procrastination would then be felt too late, when we had thrown the wealth, the power, and the influence of these great dominions into the hands of the people of the United States.

Acknowledge, therefore, we must at no distant period: but our acknowledgment when these consequences had begun to be felt would be so obviously the effect of compulsion as to make it a measure of disgrace to us and of triumph to our rivals.

Thirdly. Is there any weight in the argument that we ought to delay the recognition because the other great Powers of Europe, and specifically Russia, Austria, Prussia, and France, are not prepared to adopt the same measure?

The first objection to this argument is, that the principle of it is eternal. Austria, Russia, and Prussia object to the recognition of the Spanish American states upon the ground of its being at variance with the principle of legitimacy. Will not that reason be as good twenty years hence as it is at this day? It certainly will be so till Spain shall think fit to set the example of recognition; and Spain (in this particular of her policy altogether unchanged) was sixty years in admitting the fact that the Netherlands had thrown off her authority.

Have Austria, Russia, and Prussia any interest which should induce them to consider this question ever impartially? Have

they ever had a ship in the seas contiguous to Spanish America, or are they likely to have one?

They have positively no national interest, not the slightest, in the matter. As to France, she *has* an interest in the question, though comparatively with ours a very small one; and accordingly she has been, and still is, tampering with the agents of the several American states, and endeavouring to cajole them with fair words: her whole object and effort being, in truth, first to thwart our views, and secondly, to profit by them when accomplished.

Fourthly. Can the British Government shut its eyes to what is the interest of Great Britain in this question? That interest is immense. And are we to sacrifice the advantage and prosperity of the people of this country to the extravagant principles or prejudices of Governments which have proved to us that in their own concerns in Europe they are not disposed to sacrifice a tittle of their views and their policy to the views and policy of the British Government, when a difference of opinion arises between us?

Fifthly. The principle once decided, the mode in which the recognition is to be effected is a question of very subordinate importance.

If it should be thought better to come to it through the medium of commercial treaties, and that the recognition should be the result of such treaties, there can be no objection to such a course. But it is time that the principle should be decided. We can no longer creditably evade the question either in Parliament or with foreign Powers.

Sixthly. If there be any chance of the Spanish Government being ever willing to enter into any arrangement with the colonies, of this we may be sure, that, so long as Great Britain hesitates whether she will acknowledge their independence or not, that chance will never occur.

The *Pierre de touche* is the recognition of Great Britain. That step taken, the fate of the colonies, or at least of the greater part of them, will be considered in Spain as decided; and we may then again offer (what we have so often offered in vain) to make ourselves the channel of any reasonable proposal from

the mother country, with a better hope of our good offices being accepted.

Seventhly. What has been hitherto stated relates to the question between England, the Spanish American colonies, and Spain. But there are other and wider considerations which must not be overlooked.

At the beginning of the last century, the great object of the policy of this country was to prevent Spain *and its dependencies* from becoming French in their external relations. We resisted, therefore the succession of a prince of the House of Bourbon to the throne of Spain. A resolution passed the House of Lords, in 1711, that no peace could be safe or honorable to Great Britain or Europe, if Spain and the West Indies (meaning Spanish America) were allotted to any branch of the House of Bourbon. We were unsuccessful in our endeavours to prevent this succession, and during the greater part of the last century Spain followed France in her external policy.

The deliverance of Spain by the British arms, under the Duke of Wellington, led us to entertain hopes that a new era had arrived that Spain would at least cease to be French in her external policy; that she would, indeed, be rather English than French. By the course of events which were perhaps not within our control, our expectations have again been disappointed.

Now, we can hardly expect such an explanation from France on the subject of the army of occupation, as will leave Spain in any other situation than that of a virtual, if not actual, subjection to France, as far at least as respects her foreign policy. Surely, then, it is of the utmost importance to the best interests of this country, that we should prevent the American dependencies of this Power from being involved in that same objection.

Lastly. We have spoken of the United States of North America as our rivals in commerce and influence with the new States; but there is another and more formidable light in which they should be viewed.

The great and favourite object of the policy of this country, for more than four centuries, has been to foster and encourage our navigation, as the sure basis of our maritime power. In this branch of national industry the people of the United States



are become more formidable rivals to us than any nation which has ever yet existed ; more so even than the Dutch, whose rivalry in this respect occasioned several successive wars between the two countries. The views and policy of the North Americans seem mainly directed towards supplanting us in navigation in every quarter of the globe, but more particularly in the seas contiguous to America.

Let us recollect that, as their commercial marine is augmented, their military marine must proportionally increase. And it cannot be doubted that, if we provoke the new states of America to give a decided preference in their ports to the people of the United States over ourselves, the navigation of these extensive dominions will be lost to us, and it will, in a great measure, be transferred to our rivals.

Let us remember, then, that peace, however desirable, and however cherished by us, cannot last for ever. Sooner or later we shall probably have to contend with the combined maritime power of France and of the United States. The disposition of the new states is at present highly favorable to England. If we take the advantage of that disposition, we may establish through our influence with them a fair counterpoise to that combined maritime power.

Let us not, then, throw the present golden opportunity away, which, once lost, may never be recovered.

He was not deceived in the effect which these arguments, combining, as they did, a full justification of the colonies themselves in their revolt with a perspicuous and unanswerable exposition of our own interests as regarded both the extension of our commerce and our national supremacy, were calculated to produce. It was unanimously determined that we were not under the slightest obligation to consider the views of Spain, while only one voice, that of the Duke of Wellington, recommended a deference to the opinion of our allies on the question. But Lord Liverpool had not adopted his resolution to recognise the new states without most deliberate consideration ; having done so, he was inflexible in adhering to it ; and it is no inconsiderable



evidence of his force of character, as well as of the universal deference shown to his judgment by his colleagues, that, stedfastly as the Duke was usually inclined to adhere to a position which he had once taken up, even he felt compelled to give way, and to recall the intention which he had intimated of quitting the Cabinet rather than become a party to giving any countenance or approval to revolt in any shape or under any circumstances. Lord Liverpool's letter which produced this effect is an admirable specimen of his habitual union of courtesy and firmness.

MY DEAR DUKE, Fife House, December 8th, 1824.

I did not receive your letter till just before I was going out yesterday. In answer to the latter part of it I can only assure you most truly that nothing could give me more sincere pain, *privately* or *publicly*, than your separation, from any cause, from the Government.

It is with the deepest regret that I differ with you on the subject of Spanish America; but I can most truly say that my opinion has not been hastily formed, and that I am conscientiously convinced that if we allow these new states to consolidate their system and their policy with the United States of America, it will in a very few years prove fatal to our greatness, if not endanger our safety.

I am quite aware that the King has strong prejudices on this subject. I am very sorry for it, but I am satisfied that they originate partly in mistake as to the origin of the separation of the colonies from the mother country. I think he should be set right upon this point, as well as made to feel that the opinions which he sometimes avows on the subject of legitimacy would carry him to the full length of the principle of the Emperor of Russia and Prince Metternich.

Yours most faithfully,

LIVERPOOL.

His suggestion that the King should "be set right" on all the bearings of the question was probably dictated in part by his participation in Canning's belief that it was by the Duke himself that his Majesty had been in some degree

inoculated with the opinions to which he at times gave utterance. If he was correct in this belief, the suggestion was a covert admonition to and reproof of the Duke himself. At all events, while the language is full of conciliation towards and respect for his correspondent, and expressive of the most dutiful consideration for and deference towards the King, it shows with equal clearness the writer's sense of what is due to his own office, and his resolution, in spite of the opinions or prejudices of King or Duke, to be in fact as well as in name Prime Minister. George IV. was equally aware that when he and his minister differed, it was he who must yield to the person who bore the constitutional responsibility of his acts. But, so strongly had he taken up opinions unfavorable to Lord's Liverpool's policy on this subject, that he did not sanction it without declaring in a letter which bears marks of great care in the composition, that "he with deep regret found himself under the necessity of differing with the majority of the Cabinet. That he considered that the system of policy of his Government upon the subject had been erroneous;" and that, though he would not oppose himself to the measures considered for the benefit of his subjects and for the promotion of the navigation of the country by those to whom he had given his confidence, he wished that they should not be put forth to the world as having any other objects in view than those which he had stated as his motive for assenting to them.

The close of the year compelled Lord Liverpool also to consider one other question of foreign politics, the interest of which has so wholly passed away that it might have been excusable to pass it over without notice, were it not that, as we have seen in other instances, the opinion which Lord Liverpool formed on it was based on reasons of universal applicability as to the cases in which a mediation between nations at war is expedient or practicable, and may therefore serve in this respect as an useful precedent and example to future statesmen; while the letter in which that opinion is conveyed is further remarkable as showing



the unfaltering steadiness with which he adhered to the great rule of non-intervention, even under circumstances likely to present the strongest temptation to violate it. The Greeks had for some years been in a state of open insurrection against the Turkish Government, and the warfare which in consequence had arisen had been carried on on both sides with a merciless ferocity which was exciting the notice and indignation of the other nations of Europe. The Government which naturally took the greatest interest in it was that of Russia, and throughout 1823 and the earlier part of 1824 the Russian ministers had made different proposals to our Cabinet, the object, direct or indirect, of which was to force our joint mediation on the belligerents. The Greeks did not conceal their disinclination to admit such an interference, if it was to lead to any result short of the establishment of their complete independence; and there was no probability of the Turks being more willing to listen to it if it was to deliver their former subjects from their authority. Our ambassador at St. Petersburg had recently been replaced by a cousin of the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Stratford Canning, who in this employment laid the foundation of a reputation second to that of no diplomatist of his time; and while engaged in framing some new instructions for him, Canning addressed some questions to the Prime Minister which drew from him the following answer:

*Private and confidential.*

Walmer Castle, November 2d, 1824.

MY DEAR CANNING,

I have read the enclosed paper of questions respecting Greece.

These questions appear to me to relate to many contingencies upon which it is quite impossible to give an answer or instructions at present.

The only way, I think, of considering this question is to consider it as a *whole*, and to endeavour to see what we *can* do, and what, under all the circumstances, we would wish to be done. I assume then that neither party can be satisfied by any terms likely to be proposed.

the Greeks will be anxious to maintain their independence. The  
 same will be anxious to maintain the submission : and that  
 the Powers will receive the new privileges if any such are to  
 be granted, is a point on which they differ.

But there is a question in the present state of the contest is  
 deserving the view as to a mediation was suggested in the  
 House of Commons - and the House should acknowledge a  
 common advantage with some advantages such as a reason-  
 able tribute towards Turkey, payment of some places, &c. &c.)  
 on the part of the Turks - and that the Turks shall concede to  
 the Greeks with full satisfaction the right of governing  
 themselves.

As to intervention, which is the very great dispute at time end  
 in the war and every consideration of the Greeks. It is what  
 I think I would have - but I hope the Turks will easily.  
 It was well answered to expect that either Turks or Greeks  
 would agree to such terms, and there is no result therefore, in  
 my judgment, but that the parties shall fight it out.

would agree however to a mediation on the above terms, if  
 proposed by others - and I should not object to propose it even  
 if this is judged more advisable.

As to a plan, and this is well, I am not prepared to take part with  
 either power and I should declare it as my opinion to the  
 House that we all ought to be sensible that the contest ought to  
 be allowed to take its course in their stage and to its issue : but  
 that we should speak explicitly to both parties : to the Greeks  
 that we could not interfere further in their favour, and to the  
 Turks that they must not expect that if the Greeks should  
 make successful resistance, and if all the efforts to subdue  
 them should prove ineffectual, we should not feel ourselves at  
 liberty, as circumstances might render it just and necessary, to  
 acknowledge the Greeks as an independent power.

I am persuaded that, where two countries or two individuals get  
 into a certain relation to each other, it is idle to say "we will  
 force them to be reconciled ; there shall be no contest." You  
 cannot force them to be reconciled ; you may propose what you

<sup>1</sup> Presented in the preceding January by Count Nesselrode, the  
 Russian Prime Minister, to the Ministers of the other Powers, at  
 St. Petersburg. (See Life of Canning, ii. 415.)

think reasonable terms of accommodation if you think proper; but if those terms should be refused the contest must proceed. Supposing, however, one party to agree to the terms and the other to refuse them (a supposition I think highly improbable), are we prepared to take part with the one which agrees?

I answer decidedly in this case in the negative. I am not prepared to say that either party is *so wrong*, the Turks in enforcing their sovereign rights, or the Greeks in struggling for their independence, as to warrant third parties in interfering by force in the contest.

The conclusion, then, will be mediation, on the principles above stated, to be tried. Neutrality, if mediation fails. Is this to be explicitly stated?

So many things occur in the course of a negotiation that I think it neither prudent nor necessary to commit ourselves irrevocably as to what would be our course under every possible contingency; but I should think it both fair and expedient to apprise our allies that this was our *present opinion*. It would take from them all expectation that they might reckon upon our support and assistance in the event of their being engaged in hostilities, and it might make them pause before they committed themselves too deeply.

With respect to all minor questions which may arise in the progress of negotiation, I really do not see how these can be answered at present. Whatever creates delay may be advantageous, and a reference home, when the case is of sufficient importance to admit of it, may be enjoined.

I have thus stated to you the best opinion I can form on this very embarrassing question. I feel deeply all the difficulties of the subject. My solution of them may not be satisfactory, but it is the best at which I have been able to arrive. It does not grow out of the communication I have received from you this day; but is the result of the consideration which I have been able to give to the question since it was first forced upon our attention.

Ever sincerely yours,

LIVERPOOL.

In conformity with the opinion thus pronounced we eventually declined to take part in some conferences which



the rest of our allies held at St. Petersburg, in the hope of effecting a settlement of the dispute between the Turks and Greeks ; persevering in our refusal in spite of the great and unconcealed displeasure which it occasioned to the Czar. And the soundness of Lord Liverpool's judgment was still further proved after his death, when the aggravated horrors of the contest at last prevailed on Canning to unite the influence of Britain to that of France and Russia, in order to constrain both parties to lay down their arms ; and when this departure from the rule of conduct here laid down by Lord Liverpool led to the most unfortunate conflict at Navarino, and subsequently to open hostilities between Russia and Turkey, which had nearly ended in the utter ruin of the latter Power, a catastrophe that would have been most disastrous to our interests, and scarcely less so to our reputation for political sagacity or good faith.

In the department of finance, too, Lord Liverpool's confidence in Mr. Robinson never led him to abate his superintendence of the general arrangements of the revenue ; and another letter of his to Canning, whose speech on the Currency many years before proved him to be possessed of financial knowledge and ability of the highest class, lays down in its closing sentences with great clearness the principles by which all modifications of taxation should be regulated, and the object which in making them should be steadily kept in view. That object was so to reduce taxation, that the increased consumption to which the relief given to trade and commerce must lead might make up the deficiency of the revenue apparently caused by the reductions granted. The principle was to yield nothing to clamour, but to be guided in each particular by the merits of the case. The manner, which in affairs of Government is often not the least important consideration, was to give every reduction the appearance of voluntary concessions, by making it graciously, or in other words, early.

Walmer Castle, October 19th, 1824.

MY DEAR CANNING,

I omitted answering that part of your letter yesterday which related to our financial projects for next year.

The state of the revenue is very satisfactory, and all the papers respecting it shall be ready for consideration when we meet the beginning of December. It is important, however, that you should know that we *must* make a reduction in the spirit duties of England, and we *ought* to make a reduction in those on tobacco. We shall have, I fear, no margin for any further reduction; and there really is not a pretence for any reduction in our direct taxation, except the facility which it might give us in getting through the business of the session in the House of Commons, which I do not mean to undervalue.

Since our last reduction of the assessed taxes, the whole of our direct taxation does not exceed four millions per annum; less in proportion to our whole revenue than is paid by the subjects of any country in Europe.

When we made the reduction in the assessed taxes, two years ago, the distresses of the country, and particularly of the landed interest, were the grounds for it; these distresses have now, in a great measure, disappeared.

If we *could* do what we *ought* to do (do not be alarmed, I am not going to propose it), we should make an augmentation in our direct taxes of at least two millions; and, as a compensation, take off indirect taxes to the amount of four or five millions. By such an arrangement we should not materially reduce our revenue, and we should considerably increase the wealth and resources of the country, by the relief which might be afforded to commerce.

We are already experiencing advantages from the measures adopted last session.

Having said all this, I quite agree in the propriety of a careful review of the assessed taxes, particularly the house and window tax. That we should yield nothing to clamour, and that if there is anything which we cannot maintain, we should make it matter of voluntary concession, as early in the session as possible.

Ever truly yours,

LIVERPOOL.

Even in Ireland the policy which he pursued was producing its fruits ; a letter which before the end of the year he received from Lord Wellesley presents a picture of the general aspect of that country, both agriculturally and politically, such as few of the previous years would have justified. The Catholic Association indeed, which, under the able but unscrupulous guidance of Mr. O'Connell, had recently been established, and was just commencing a series of active operations, was doing its best to keep alive that disaffection which the impartial administration of justice, and the return of substantial prosperity, had almost extinguished.

*Private and confidential.*

Phoenix Park, November 22d, 1824.

MY DEAR LORD,

I was most happy to hear so good an account of your recovery and confirmed health from Canning. Most sincerely do I hope that you may continue in strength and spirits to meet the fatigues of your arduous duty. In this hope I am cordially joined by all that is respectable of every party in this country, and by none more zealously or faithfully than by Mr. Plunkett. I know no evil of such portentous aspect to the empire, and especially to this country, as any event would be which should deprive us of your public services. For myself, my unfeigned anxiety on this point is greatly increased by my personal confidence in your invariable kindness towards me, and by a warm sense of gratitude for the honorable support which I have received from you since my arrival in Ireland. You will perceive by my official communications, which will reach you in a few days, that the condition of Ireland is greatly improved within the last year. Tranquillity is generally, if not universally restored. The causes of its restoration are such as promise permanently beneficial consequences. Every measure, Insurrection Act, Police, Tithe Bill, Revision of Magistracy, Petty Sessions, Better Administration of Law, has succeeded beyond my most sanguine hopes. The general prosperity of the empire begins to reach Ireland. Prices have improved, rents and even tithes are better paid, and in the districts which



had been most disturbed the people are turning their attention to pursuits of industry and honest labour, instead of plotting or executing schemes of outrage and violence. The Insurrection Act has been very generally removed, and it is a very satisfactory circumstance that not one district from which it has been removed has since been disturbed. In some districts the farmers patrol with the police and military when occasion requires. In short, I should have been able, at the opening of Parliament, to present the gratifying tribute of "*Ireland tranquillized*" to his Majesty, were not the general prosperity and happiness disturbed by the noisy fury of the Catholic Association, by its contentions with the Orange Association, and by the polemical clamour of conflicting religious zealots. These new descriptions of outrages "thunder in the index," but have not revived positive violence, nor do I entertain any alarm of immediate acts of force. But it is very painful to endure such an interruption of the harvest of all our labours at a moment when prosperity is advancing with so rapid and yet steady a course. The causes, however, of good are now so securely and generally established that I look without fear to the ultimate results of the system which I have pursued under the direction of your Administration.

I shall submit to you and the Cabinet my view of the condition of Ireland with relation to the Catholic Association, as well as to other political associations, the existence of which is alleged as the proximate cause and justification of the institution of the Catholic Association. The state of the laws affecting this matter is now under consideration here; and you will be enabled, before the meeting of Parliament, to exercise your judgment on the expediency of providing any further regulations of law applicable to the peculiar circumstances and more extended operation of these associations.

Believe me, my dear Lord,

Yours most faithfully and sincerely,

WELLESLEY.

For the purpose of the present work, as throwing a light on Lord Liverpool's personal character, not the least valuable parts of the above letter are its opening sentences:



which forcibly express the feelings of attachment and confidence with which he inspired all his colleagues ; Lord Wellesley, as had been seen, on more than one occasion had too high an opinion of his own position and ability to be disposed to act very cordially or unquestioningly under any one. He had been at one time especially indisposed towards Lord Liverpool, with whom his resignation in 1812 had indeed proclaimed an irreconcilable difference, and whom he afterwards looked on as a rival, and a successful one, for the chief post in the Administration. But Lord Liverpool's frankness of demeanour and steadiness of system, joined to the good faith and manliness with which he invariably supported every colleague, had completely conciliated even Lord Wellesley's jealous and somewhat arrogant temper, and led him, as we see, to acknowledge with gratitude the treatment which he received from him.

## CHAPTER XXX.

The prosperity of the country still increases—Lord Liverpool sees in it a fresh inducement to extend freedom of trade—The Catholic Association—Revision of the Acts relating to unlawful societies—Lord Liverpool's speech—Lord F. L. Gower, in the House of Commons, carries a resolution for endowing the Roman Catholic Priesthood in Ireland—A resolution in favour of Catholic Emancipation is carried in the House of Commons—The Duke of York's speech and vow—Lord Liverpool's speech on the Bill in the House of Lords—Obligations of the Coronation Oath considered—The constant omnipotence of the existing Parliament—Lord Liverpool denounces the existing spirit of speculation—The Duke of Buckingham appeals to the King against Lord Liverpool's neglect of him—Lord Amherst as Governor-General—Duke of Wellington's opinion of the Burmese war—Growing prosperity of Ireland—Measures contemplated in that country—Panic in London—Lord Liverpool's opinion on the course to be taken.

At the beginning of the year 1825 everything seemed to betoken a continuance, and even an increase, of the prosperity which had marked its predecessor. The ministers themselves ventured to pronounce it unequalled ; nor did it occur to any one to question the accuracy of the statement which they put into the mouth of their royal master at the opening of Parliament, that "there never was a period in the history of this country when all the great interests of the nation were at the same time in so thriving a condition ; or when a feeling of content and satisfaction was more widely diffused through all classes of the British people." Indeed, so far were the leaders of the Opposition from throwing a doubt on its correctness, that Lord

Lansdowne fully endorsed it, with an addition by which he expressly gave a great portion of the credit due for so much of our prosperity as arose from the extension of our commerce to the Cabinet. "He gave his hearty concurrence to all that had been said about the internal prosperity of the country, and the wisdom of its foreign policy in the recognition of the independent States of South America;" and Lord Liverpool, who made it a rule to take the opportunity of the discussion on the Address to describe the existing condition of the country, and its causes, gracefully admitted the Parliament itself to a share in Lord Lansdowne's eulogy. "If," he said, "the two Houses of Parliament had displayed firmness in the course of the great struggle which they had carried on against France, they had shown no less steadiness in meeting the pressure consequent upon the conclusion of that struggle. They had encountered and supported it. They had replaced the circulation of the kingdom on its proper, its only safe basis of a sound metallic currency, without violating a single engagement with the public creditor. The task had been an Herculean one; but we were now enjoying the reward of its accomplishment in the unprecedented, unparalleled prosperity of every part of the country." And the use he proposed to make of this prosperity was in the highest degree statesmanlike, and sufficiently marks the difference between him and those ministers who have been content to go on as it were from hand to mouth, willing to enjoy and take credit for the flourishing aspect of the moment, but unable to see beyond the present hour, to derive from it either warning or encouragement, much less to make it a stepping-stone to a still more extensive well-doing. In his eyes the universally flourishing state of the kingdom did not preach supineness to its rulers, but rather ought to awaken and stimulate their energies. It rather exhorted them, with a peremptoriness which would admit of no excuse, to press forward in the path which had already led to so many

advantages. In such a posture of affairs as that which was now existing, "Government might fairly proceed to the agreeable task of removing those restrictions, which under less favorable auspices it would have been unsafe to meddle with. Parliament was bound at all times to act with caution, but, though he might have held that, up to a certain time, those restrictions ought to be maintained, he had nevertheless always laid down the general principles of free trade as the great foundation of national prosperity, and as those which ought to be resorted to at the earliest moment that the situation of England would permit." And he explained the reasons for which he had advised the recognition of the new South American States. It was undoubtedly true that their establishment as separate and independent nations would open a wide field to our commerce; but "he should have considered himself unworthy of the situation which he filled, if he had allowed that question, as far as his opinion was concerned, to be argued upon any narrow principle of commercial interests whatever. On a former occasion he had stated that he did not think that England, or any other country, had a right to set itself up in judgment between the mother country and her colonies. We had no right to dispute their independence; but, on the other hand, we were not entitled to assert and maintain it. The noble mover of the address" (Lord Dudley and Ward) "had adverted to the existence of two parties in another country, one of which was disposed to bring back all abuses, the other to uphold the doctrines of insurrection and resistance to authority. It was strange that in this country also, the very same parties who could only hear of one nation planning an invasion of another with indignation, would, when any colony rose against its parent state, express nothing but astonishment that its struggles for liberty should not instantly be assisted. He maintained that, except as far as was necessary for her own safety, England had no right to interfere. Prior to a decided recognition of the South American States, there



were several questions to be decided. Was there any dispute still pending and open between the colonies and the parent state? Were any measures in progress likely to bring about a reconciliation? Was there any considerable party in the colony in arms in favour of the mother country? In either of these two last cases, no foreign power had a right to interfere; but, if no such circumstances were in operation, then the right accrued to interfere, not for the peculiar benefit of either party, but for the advantage of the world at large."

There can be no question that the course pursued by the Government, and explained and defended by these arguments by the Prime Minister, was in strict accordance with common sense and national law. Our complaint against France in 1778 was that she entirely disregarded the existence of facts thus described by Lord Liverpool as considerations which made any interference of a foreign country in such a quarrel as that in which we were then engaged improper. At that time all hope of a reconciliation with the colonies was certainly not universally abandoned even in America; and it was still more notorious that a large party in the revolted states still clung to the old connection, and furnished recruits to our armies, when France threw her sword into the scale in the hope of deciding a contest of which the event, without her aid, seemed to many, certainly to France herself, wholly uncertain. But we did not recognise the independence of the Spanish settlements till all war between them and Spain was absolutely terminated; till Spain had altogether abandoned all attempt to enforce obedience; everything, in fact, except an inert claim which she had no means of taking a single step to enforce, and till the consequence of her claim, coupled with her inaction, was to render the South American seas a free field for unchecked piracy.

One other topic to which, on this occasion, Lord Liverpool alluded, gave rise to more than one fierce discussion

hereafter, and at the moment elicited most marked and animated observations from peers connected with Ireland. About a year and a half before, a society had been organized under the name of the Catholic Association, professedly to advocate and further by all lawful means the interests and claims of the Roman Catholics, but really designed to attain its objects by the most extensive corruption and intimidation. To provide means for the former it demanded, not only of its members but of all Roman Catholics, a contribution, to which it gave the name of the Catholic Rent, and to which the priests throughout the country compelled their congregations to subscribe, generally themselves assessing the amount which they conceived that each parishioner could afford to pay, and often denouncing from the altar any who were reluctant or niggardly contributors. The latter it carried out by a wholesale interference with the ordinary course of justice, by publications affirming the innocence or guilt of accused persons before trial, and often by the fabrication and prosecution of the most groundless charges against individuals who opposed or were known to be unfavorable to their views. The royal speech, while expressing the "gratification of his Majesty that Ireland was participating in the general prosperity; that outrages had so far ceased as, in most of the districts heretofore disturbed, to warrant the suspension of the extraordinary powers which had been conferred on the executive government; that industry and commercial enterprise are extending themselves," had added that "it was therefore the more to be regretted that associations should exist in Ireland which had adopted proceedings irreconcilable with the spirit of the Constitution, and were calculated, by exciting alarm and exasperating animosities, to endanger the peace of society and to retard the course of national improvement." It had further expressed "his Majesty's reliance on the wisdom of Parliament to consider, without delay, the means of applying a remedy to this evil." And Lord Liverpool could not, as

Prime Minister, close his own speech without alluding to the subject ; denouncing the Association as one not only organized for the express purpose of "evading and nullifying the law of the land," not only openly violating every principle of the Constitution by "actually levying an unauthorised tax upon the Catholic population of Ireland," but also as being so incompatible with the real interests of the Catholics themselves and with the position which they ought to assume, that "he protested that, if he stood before the House as the advocate of the Catholic claims, the first Act which he would vote for would be the putting down of that convention, the Catholic Association ; because, if the Catholic claims were to be granted they ought to be granted on their own merits, and not to the demand of such an association, acting in such a manner." Many Irish peers spoke in the debate. Lord Roden fully agreed with the sentiments thus expressed, but Lord Donoughmore and Lord Clifden declared their entire dissent from them : the one affirming that the law courts had decided that the Association was not seditious, and extolling the Catholic priesthood as "having been most active, and more than usually successful, in discouraging sedition and tumult:" and the other avowing that "he had perused the address of that Association, which had been read from the pulpit of every chapel in Ireland ; that he had been a subscriber to that Association, and by the blessing of God would continue to be so until the Government should contrive to make it illegal ; and warning the ministers that, however they might suppress the Catholic Association in its present form, they could not prevent private subscriptions, and other measures of a similar nature." Lord Clifden did not see that, when he admitted that the priests had universally read the address of the Association from their pulpits, he was absolutely negating Lord Donoughmore's acquittal of them as agents of sedition and tumult, and giving his own testimony in support of the strongest part of the charge which the Government brought against them.

Speeches such as these were not greatly calculated to shake the confidence of the ministers in their own judgment on the character of the Association, and on the way in which it became them to deal with it. And exactly a month afterwards Lord Liverpool moved the second reading of a bill which had already been passed by great majorities in the House of Commons, "to amend the Acts relating to unlawful societies in Ireland;" the illegality of the Association being thus implied in the mere title of the measure. He had previously resisted and defeated a motion that the Association should be heard at the bar of the House by counsel against the bill, on the ground that the facts of the case were notorious and undenied, and that the real object sought for was delay, to enable the Association to protract the mischief which it was doing. His speech in advocacy of his measure was marked by most signal moderation and fairness. He repeated that "it rested on grounds so entirely different from those on which the expediency of Catholic Emancipation was refused, that he had no hesitation in saying that, were he the most ardent friend of emancipation, he should still think this bill just and necessary." Not that he found fault with those who sought to obtain relief from any laws which they might think unfair or oppressive in a legal way. "The people of Ireland might naturally enough think that they had grievances; and, so thinking, they had an undoubted right to complain of them. They might be dissatisfied that Parliament had refused them the political rights which they demanded. They might fairly, properly, and justly come to their Lordships' bar in order to make their case known. But," and he proceeded once more to remind the House of the ceaseless and unequalled stream of remedial and beneficial measures which, during his Administration, had been poured upon the country, "had nothing of late been done for Ireland? Had not, during the last few years, more been done for the peace, the prosperity, and the happiness of Ireland than had been



done for centuries before ? Every complaint of every kind had been heard. The whole revenue system of Ireland had been reformed in a manner that had given general satisfaction ; England had taken upon herself the whole debt of Ireland, and had so reduced her taxation that Ireland paid no direct taxes, and less taxes of any kind than any other country in Europe, being still on equal terms with England in every respect. The administration of justice had been corrected. The magistracy had been reformed ; everything that had been done was a proof of the kind, the generous, the affectionate disposition of the Government to the people of Ireland ; a proof that they had been treated not merely with justice and fairness, but with indulgence and favour. Whether or not the remainder of what they desired should be granted to them was a wholly distinct question."

Even towards the Association itself he forbore to apply language of severity. "He believed it to be constituted much in the same way in which any body of that sort would naturally be constituted. He believed their proceedings to have been much the same as the proceedings of such a body would have been under any circumstances. He believed there were many innocent, many well-disposed members of that Association. He believed that the great majority of the Association did not see the dangers which they were bringing on their country. But his objection to the Association was, that no such body could exist in any nation, or under any state of things, without the production of the greatest evils. He imputed no especial blame to it, as distinguished from other similar bodies. He well knew what any men so associated could do and say ; of how much intemperance they must necessarily be guilty, of what endless evils their combination must be productive."

But, though he knew from the assertions of Lord Clifden that many who were not Roman Catholics had subscribed to the Catholic Rent, he did not think it becoming his own

position as minister to put a charitable construction on that part of the proceedings, nor to suffer Lord Clifden's attempt to compare it to other voluntary subscriptions to pass without rebuke. He denied that it had any feature of a voluntary subscription; that it had not was proved by its very name. "The term rent implies previous obligation: something essentially different from subscription. It was procured by a communication kept up by the Association with every parish in Ireland, for the purpose of raising money from the whole of the Catholic population of the country. Such a mode of raising money, let it be called by what name any one might choose to give it, could not, in the nature of things, be voluntary. Those who raised it had unquestionably no legal right to do so. To understand the whole character of this part of the instruction, let us look," continued the speaker, "at the instruments which are employed to raise this money, and at the places in which it is raised. The instruments are the Roman Catholic clergy; the places of collection are the Roman Catholic chapels. Is there any man who can doubt, knowing, as he must know, the connection that exists between the priest and his flock, what the nature of this subscription is?"

"I have heard something like a statement that in one instance the parties attempted to distrain for the rent, and actually brought the matter before the quarter sessions. I will not dwell on this point; but I say generally that when I am told of the existence of such a body in the country, I do not want to know anything more; I do not want to know whether they keep red books or black books. I know that they obtain information of all that takes place, and I know that, under such circumstances, applying as in some instances they do, to religious, and in all to political feelings, nine out of ten contribute to the Rent from fear; from a dislike of being regarded with an evil eye by their fellow-citizens; from a variety of motives having the character of control, and not of free-will. Now, my lords, let us see what are the purposes of this Associa-

tion, so constituted, with permanence for their character, with a revenue at their disposal, and with an avowed determination to interfere with the administration of justice. It has been said that those purposes may be innocent, and even laudable. I utterly deny it. When it is claimed for the Association that it has done good by tranquillizing the country, I deny the fact : but, if it were true, I should not consider it the less dangerous on that account. If such a body can promote the tranquillity of the country, the means by which they do so may at some future period be used with equal effect to disturb it ; and I, for one, do not choose that the peace of the State should be entrusted to such hands. For this I know full well, that if there existed in any country a body of persons determined, if possible, to overthrow its government and destroy its Constitution, by eventually unfurling the banner of rebellion, their first object would be to preach peace. Nothing is so fatal to insurrection as a premature rising."

One of the greatest objections to such an Association, as it presented itself to his mind, was that it inevitably provoked the formation of antagonistic societies. For, as he continued, "if the Catholics of Ireland are to be permitted to associate, who would say that the Protestants also would not unite ? It is the natural course of things ; combination necessarily leads to counter-combination. Nor, however superior in number the Catholics in Ireland may be, are the Protestants so contemptible in point of numbers, wealth, intelligence, and character, as not to constitute a formidable party ; and, under such circumstances, how is justice to be administered in Ireland ? What must be the result of permitting the existence of rival societies, each supported by the whole strength of one religious party, and of necessity full of animosity against every other ? Nothing less, my lords, than an aggravation of all the evils from which Ireland has suffered ; nothing less than to give additional strength and vehemence to all those feelings by which

dissension, will be fomented, and religious animosities increased. The present bill," he concluded, "did not specify the Catholic Association, because it was not against that body alone that it was aimed. It was not in special hostility to any one party in Ireland that it was introduced. It was brought forward to mark the course which Parliament was resolved to take with respect to all associations, for, if all were not put down, all must be suffered to exist."

It was not easy to reply to, it was impossible to refute, so cogent a speech. The few members of the Opposition who raised a voice against it were driven to misrepresentations of the bill too palpable even to deserve the name of artful, and described the intended suppression of the Association, though all Protestant clubs were equally to be suppressed, as a denial to one party alone, the Roman Catholics, of the right of petitioning for the removal of admitted grievances, and even as a penal statute. Lord Lansdowne, who closed the debate on that side, took a somewhat singular line. He avowed himself prepared to vote against the bill; but, referring to the proceedings at the beginning of the week in the House of Commons, where a majority of thirteen<sup>1</sup> had agreed to a motion made by Sir Francis Burdett for a committee to take the claims of the Roman Catholics into consideration, he said that "that circumstance, if he knew anything of the Catholic body, must teach them the policy of suspending, for a time at least, the angry feelings which they, not without reason, entertained. They had now much to hope for. He conscientiously believed that in this, as well as in the other House of Parliament, there were many persons who had voted, or who were about to vote, for the bill before them, who were nevertheless as warm friends to their cause as any persons in the world. This he wished the Catholics to be convinced of; and he wished them, moreover, to place their full confidence in their real friends. Having stated his objections to the bill, he should not oppose it in its future

<sup>1</sup> The numbers were 247 to 234.



stages with so much pertinacity as he should otherwise have felt it his duty to display." Language such as this seemed to justify the inference that, in the vote which he announced his intention of giving, the Marquis was consulting more what he conceived to be his character for consistency than his real convictions. He was at all events going out of his way to furnish the supporters of the Government policy with an additional justification of their conduct, if any were needed, since he declared their approval of the bill consistent with the most sincere goodwill to the cause not only of Ireland, but of the Catholics themselves. And indeed Lord Harrowby, who followed him, affirmed that "it was because he was sincere in his wish to emancipate the Roman Catholics that he gave his decided support to this bill." By the great majority of 146 to 44 the Peers sanctioned the policy of the ministers; and, on the very same evening, Lord Liverpool's closing argument, that all political societies would be equally extinguished by the bill, was corroborated in the House of Commons, where an influential member of the Orange Association announced that, as soon as the bill had become law, that body would at once proceed to dissolve itself.

The next month, another division in the House of Commons evinced still more unmistakeably the desire of that branch of the Legislature to grant everything to the Roman Catholic body which could be done for it with safety, when Lord Francis Leveson Gower carried a resolution, "That it was expedient that a provision should be made by law towards the maintenance of the secular Roman Catholic clergy exercising religious functions in Ireland." Such a vote was, or perhaps it should rather be said, ought to have been, a crisis in the Catholic question. Though the proposal which it affirmed had never before been submitted to Parliament, it was not new to our statesmen. In Pitt's mind it had been a necessary accompaniment of Emancipation, as that measure also was necessary to the completion of a perfect and harmonious union between the English

and the Irish peoples. That greatest of ministers, who had originally intended to make a clause conferring all political privileges on the Roman Catholics an integral part of the Act of Union, saw also that, without a provision for the Roman Catholic clergy, emancipation itself would be but a half measure, and the most unsafe half. For it would leave the Roman Catholics a grievance to stimulate the exercise of their new power in the most dangerous manner. It would put a weapon in their hands, and at the same moment set up before them an object for attack. For it was impossible to suppose that they would ever be satisfied and contented to see their own Church in a state of destitution, while not only the Established Church was in possession of an ample revenue, but while the Presbyterians also were endowed by the State. In submitting his resolution, therefore, to Parliament, Lord Francis was only carrying out the views which Pitt had acknowledged, and, had he not been hindered by one insuperable obstacle, would himself have proposed, and, there can be little doubt, would have carried. No one ventured to propose a similar resolution in the House of Lords. What is far more singular, Lord Francis himself took no step to give effect to the resolution which he had carried; he brought in no bill, nor from that day to this has the endowment of the Roman Catholic priesthood been revived as a formal proposal or measure. Of late, it has been said that the priests would refuse to accept a State endowment, but that statement does not probably obtain very general belief. It is easy to resolve to refuse what has not been offered, and what is not expected to be offered; but we have seen that many years ago the Roman Court gave a formal consent to measures which they understood to be in contemplation, and which would have given the Government a far greater authority over its priests than could be obtained by a mere payment of fixed stipends; so that no refusal to receive a State endowment can be based on the ground of unchangeable principle. And at this,

or at any time before 1829, it cannot possibly be doubted that the Roman Catholic authorities in Ireland or at Rome would gladly and thankfully have accepted endowment as a part of the emancipation which they desired.<sup>1</sup> Unhappily, the Duke of Wellington and Mr. Peel, when they carried the Act of 1829, failed to see the necessity of coupling the two measures ; or rather, were so unwilling to make any concession at all, that they granted as little as possible. Had Canning lived to pass the Act which was subsequently extorted from them, he, with his recollection of the policy of his great master, Pitt, would not have left his measure of grace incomplete. He would have seen that it was a case in which it was safer to grant all than half ; and that the true wisdom was, while giving power, to take away all temptation to misuse it.

The question of Emancipation itself was invested with some new features this year, not only by the passing of a bill brought in by Sir Francis Burdett, to effect it through all its stages, by the House of Commons ; for, as we have seen on a former occasion, that body had before shown itself favorable to the measure ; but by the line taken by the Duke of York, who, a few days after the decision of the Lower House had been pronounced upon the second reading,<sup>2</sup> took the opportunity of the presentation of a

<sup>1</sup> "*March 17, 1825.*—Yesterday Dr. Doyle (Roman Catholic Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin) was examined by the Committee of the House of Commons on Ireland. He positively objected to any interference of a Protestant sovereign in the nomination, or recommendation, or control, or choice of Roman Catholic clergy, as prelates or parish priests : unwilling to receive any State provision, rejecting it absolutely, unless equality of civil rights were given to the Roman Catholic laity ; and even would accept such provision only as permanently annexed to each benefice or dignity."—(*Diary of Lord Colchester*, iii. 373.) It seems to follow that *if* it had been intended to grant "equality of civil rights" to the laity, Dr. Doyle would willingly have accepted the State provision for the priesthood as an accompaniment of that measure.

<sup>2</sup> The majority for the second reading was 268 *v.* 241 ; for the third reading 248 *v.* 227. The second reading was carried April 21st. The

petition against it from the chapters of Windsor to address a most earnest appeal to the Peers: denouncing the measure as one which "would make a total change in the fundamental principles of the Constitution, and, in his view of the question, would strike at the very root of its existence;" declaring that he was "uttering his honest and conscientious sentiments, founded upon principles which he had imbibed from his earliest youth;" and calling God to witness that they "were principles to which he would adhere, and which he would maintain and act up to, to the latest moment of his existence, whatever might be his situation in life." It was not only because the Duke was supposed to be peculiarly in his brother's confidence, and, as it were, to be speaking the King's mind in the matter, but because the health of George IV. was understood to be so precarious that there seemed every likelihood that the Duke himself might soon be on the throne, (his closing sentences, indeed, manifestly alluding to that probability,) that such a declaration of unalterable resolution was looked upon as one of great importance, and as such was strenuously canvassed by both parties. The advocates of emancipation condemned it without disguise or restraint of language; Mr. Brougham assailing it with such a combination of ridicule and invective in the House of Commons, that the Speaker was forced to interfere; while even of those who coincided with the royal speaker in his sentiments, many doubted the prudence, and more the taste of so positive a declaration of unchangeableness. Even the King himself was not altogether pleased at the allusion to the possibility of the Duke's succession, and said that he had no intention of vacating the throne for him at present. On the other hand, those who disapproved of concession, extolled it as equally admirable for its wisdom and its manliness, printed it in letters of gold, and circulated it in every part of the kingdom. The occurrence naturally gave additional interest

Duke of York's speech was delivered April 25th. Lord F. L. Gower's resolution was carried April 29th, by 205 *v.* 162.



to the debate in the Lords on the Emancipation Bill when it came up from the Commons ; and on the 17th of May, Lord Donoughmore, who had so long been the steady advocate of the measure, moved its second reading.

Reports had been diligently circulated by the friends of the Roman Catholics, that Lord Liverpool had begun to entertain doubts on the question ; and there seems some reason to believe that, for a moment, he had been disposed to view the project of conferring stipends on the Roman Catholic priests as a measure not necessarily connected with, and less objectionable than, the restoration of civil privileges to the laity.<sup>1</sup> If, however, he had at any time thought such a step admissible, renewed reflection (as will be presently seen) showed it to him in a wholly different light ; while to civil emancipation he was as strongly opposed as ever. And, as he was aware of the existence of the reports that such was not the case, he applied himself to refute them, by a speech of extraordinary elaboration. The reasonings by which he maintained his opinions in former years have been already mentioned ; but, even at some risk of repetition, it may be pardonable to give a sketch of the address he now delivered, partly because it was the last he ever pronounced upon the question, partly because it is perhaps the ablest defence of the restrictions ever composed, or at all events recorded, and still more

<sup>1</sup> There is no trace of such an idea in any of his correspondence which has been preserved ; and in Lord Colchester's Diary, March 17th, 1825 (six weeks before Lord F. L. Gower's motion, which was brought forward April 29th), we find : " In the House of Lords, Lord Liverpool, coming across the House to consult me about the necessity of the Crown's consent to public money being given as a provision for the Roman Catholic clergy, I took the opportunity of saying that ' I hoped there was no truth in the report that he had in any degree altered his mind about resisting the Roman Catholic claims to political power.' To which he replied, ' Certainly not ; and those rumours have been contradicted.' I rejoined that I had seen paragraphs in the public papers both ways, and was glad to find the rumours of his change of sentiments unfounded. He said, ' The Roman Catholic measures proposed were to be put into separate bills.' "

because an unusual proportion of it has a striking bearing on the politics of the present day ; and that any speech should be applicable to a state of things forty years later, we must admit to be in itself an undeniable evidence of the ability of the speaker, and of the soundness of the general principles on which he has rested his argument, even though we may differ from and lament the conclusion to which it led him.

The debate had lasted several hours ; Lord Colchester had moved an amendment to postpone the bill for six months, and had been seconded by Lord Anglesey, whose resistance to the Catholic claims was especially remarkable, because, as he himself stated, "he had supported all the former concessions to the Roman Catholics," but had been disappointed in the spirit in which they had received them. "Every concession that had been made to them had been followed by increased restlessness and irritation ; their conduct and the language which they had adopted were such as to show that emancipation alone would not satisfy them, and that they would be content with nothing but Catholic ascendancy. Such being the state of things, he would go no further in the course of concession ; there he would take his stand." He was followed by many others : by Irish peers, who took opposite sides ; by English bishops, who equally differed in their views ;<sup>1</sup> and when Lord Lansdowne, as the chief spokesman of the Opposition, had closed the debate on their side, Lord Liverpool rose. He began by expressing his willingness "to meet the question as one of expediency ; to look fairly at the advantages which were expected from it, and at the evils to which it might give rise. The question before the House was, perhaps, one of the most important that Parliament had ever been called upon to decide. The noble lords opposite maintained that it was fitting to grant the concessions demanded, because the Catholics of this country and

<sup>1</sup> The Bishops of Llandaff (Van Mildert) and Chester (Blomfield) spoke against the bill ; the Bishop of Norwich (Bathurst) for it.

Ireland ought, and were entitled, to enjoy equal civil rights and immunities at all points with their Protestant brethren. This was the plain proposition of the advocates for emancipation, and he would deal plainly with it. He met it with a decided negative. He said that the Catholics were not entitled to equal rights in a Protestant country. Upon some points he had been favorable to the Catholics; he did not know that there were not others on which he might still be so; but upon that broad principle that they were entitled to equal rights with their Protestant fellow-subjects, he and their friends were at direct issue. He admitted, no man could dream of denying, that all subjects in a free state were entitled to the enjoyment of equal rights upon equal conditions; but then the qualification of that principle in the case of the Catholics was clear. The Catholics who demanded these equal rights did not afford equal conditions. The difference could be stated in a single sentence and in a moment. The Protestant gave an entire allegiance to his sovereign; the Catholic gave a divided one: the service of the one was complete, that of the latter was only qualified: and he could never admit that the Roman Catholic, whose allegiance was divided between our own sovereign and a foreign prince, was entitled to the enjoyment of the same civil rights and privileges as the Protestant, who acknowledged but one ruler.

“ Thus much he thought it necessary to premise, because, great as might be the arguments drawn from expediency, it was necessary in the first place to found them upon the solid and immutable principles of justice, and he should not enter into any theological discussions. We had nothing now to do with the dogmas of the Roman Catholic Church, the doctrine of transubstantiation, or the invocation of saints. He should confine himself to the power which, notwithstanding all that had been said upon the subject, he maintained that the Pope still exercised over the great body of the Roman Catholics. He knew that it had been the policy of the advocates of the Catholics to maintain

that that authority was extinct, but he needed but to refer to the evidence lately given before their lordships, evidence which must strike every one with surprise, to prove the extraordinary influence which was even at that day exercised by the Pope. The presentation to vacant sees in the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland was vested in the Pope at that moment; and, though he might occasionally yield to the recommendations of others, the strict right of nomination he reserved to himself. But when he listened to others, the appointments which he might make might be more objectionable and dangerous than if he made them out of his own head. Dr. Doyle had stated before the committee that not only James II., but his son and grandson, had for a succession of years recommended to the vacant Irish bishoprics, and that the Pope had invariably attended to their recommendations. If, therefore, the King of France or Spain were now to recommend an individual to the Pope, who could say that he would not attend to their recommendation? And could any one say that a sect owning allegiance to a foreign potentate who claimed to exercise such a power could safely be entrusted with all the civil rights and privileges which were enjoyed by Protestants? He knew it had been said that the progress of education and civilization had mitigated the animosity of the Catholics towards those who differed from them; and perhaps, looking to the present aspect of the times, it might appear to superficial observers that little danger from them was now to be apprehended. But he would remind their lordships that the horizon was often the clearest and most serene when the tempest was nearest. He would appeal to history, and would ask at what period did the Church appear to be in a more flourishing and safe condition than at the Restoration? and yet in only twenty years afterwards the greatest revolution took place in the condition of that Church, and it was next to a miracle that it was not, by the machinations of a Popish prince, overwhelmed in one common ruin with the state and constitu-



tion of the country. It was not to the Pope, as pope, that he objected, it was to the principle of the existence of such a power as that which belonged to the Pope ; it was to the power, the temporal, the practical power, of the Popish priesthood over all the relations of private life.

"The noble Marquis had stated that the conduct of the Roman Catholic clergy had nothing to do with the practical discussion of this question. He could not agree in that opinion. He thought that the conduct of the Roman Catholic clergy mainly influenced that of the whole Roman Catholic body, and that this necessarily arose from the nature of the relations which existed between them." He instanced the power which the practice of confession gave the clergy ; and the subject of marriage, on which, in some cases, the law of the Romish Church and of this kingdom were directly at issue ; and other cases in which, though they did not set themselves up against the actual law, the practice of the priests led them to most unjustifiable interference with family arrangements ; affirming that he himself "had known more than one instance in which a Roman Catholic priest had refused to marry a Roman Catholic gentleman to a Protestant lady unless he would engage that all his children of both sexes should be brought up as members of the Roman Catholic Church. The evidence of Dr. Murray had satisfied him that this practice prevailed to this day in Ireland ; and how, he asked, could the professors of such opposite systems of faith and practice be ever united and knit together in bonds of social harmony ? and if they could not, whose fault was it ? It was not the fault of the laws, it was not the fault of the Protestants, it was not the fault of England ; it was owing to the Roman Catholics themselves, and to the bigoted and intolerant conduct of their clergy, the natural effect of which was to create disunion and to perpetuate distrust. He repeated that his wish was not to look at the question theologically, but as one of convenience ; but a part of that very question of convenience must depend on the

degree of influence exercised by the Roman Catholic priesthood, and on the species of power which the tenets of the Roman Catholic faith put into their hands. His peculiar objection to the Roman Catholic religion was that it penetrated into every domestic scene, and inculcated a system of tyranny never known elsewhere.

"Now in reference to the measure before the House, what were the evils to be dreaded from leaving things in their present position? He might go further. He might in fairness call upon its supporters to prove, before this alteration was agreed to, that there would be no evil attending it. He would not ask so much from them; he only required them to show what benefit would arise from concession. If all the evils which he had pointed out were really to be expected, then the advantages promised by the advocates of the present bill were out of the question. He held, their lordships held, the very bill before them held, that a Protestant succession was the foundation of our constitutional system. He would say that, if this measure should pass, the Protestant succession would not be worth a farthing. The State was Protestant essentially; the Crown was to be Protestant, and the successors to the throne must adhere to the same faith. But were they to be the only persons so limited? He would speak of a king's rights here in the same sense, and no other, as that in which he would argue the rights of a peasant. Was it not hard upon the King and the heir to the throne that they must be bound to the Protestant religion, while every one else in the kingdom, the judges, the ministers, and the secretaries of State, might be Roman Catholics? Why should this be? Where was the peculiar, the additional danger of having a Popish king or a Popish chancellor,<sup>1</sup> if all the other executive offices might be filled by those who acknowledged the Pope?

<sup>1</sup> Sir F. Burdett's bill had retained the clause which prohibited any Roman Catholic from becoming Lord Chancellor, or Lord Keeper, or Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, but opened to the Roman Catholics every other office.

There was even less danger in a Popish chancellor, who might be removed at pleasure, than in a Popish chief justice, who could only be deprived for grave offences and by a peculiar process of law. He thought that, above all things, the House ought not to deceive the people. They ought at once to declare that, if the bill were to pass, Great Britain would no longer be a Protestant state." And the occurrences of the present day testify to the keen political foresight with which he proceeded to depict the results which, as he expected, would flow from its ceasing to be so, and the steps by which those results would be arrived at. "The evil he apprehended from the passing of such a bill would not be immediate, but it would be inevitable, and it would come upon the country in a manner little expected. It was not the immediate object of the Catholics to possess themselves at once of the property of the Established Church. They were too wary to proceed openly and directly in any such design. No, their object was, in the first instance, merely to diminish the property of the Church. What was the language held by one of their great authorities, Dr. Doyle, upon this very point? That he did wish to decrease the magnitude of the possessions of the Church, but he wished it, not as a priest, but as an Irishman. Was any man so blind, was any man so deaf, was any man so lost to all the benefits of experience, as not to know what such language really meant? Was any man so thoroughly ignorant of the course of human actions as not to know that when once the property of the Church was violated under any such pretence, it would soon be seized upon; and that such was the real object of Catholic cupidity? The most insidious way in which the Catholics could possibly set about their work was to say, 'Take the property of the Established Church and give it to the public for the general benefit of the country.' For when once the property of the Protestant hierarchy was invaded and impaired by such an artful attack, it required but little wisdom to foretell what would befall the remainder of its

rights and possessions. The grand maxim of the Catholics was, 'If one Church swims, the other must sink; destroy or depress the Protestant Establishment, and that of the Catholics will flourish.' There was nothing inconsistent in the evidence before the House, for the Catholics thought that if they could destroy the Church by what they called legislative means, it was no destruction in the sense of their profession. To destroy that Church was, in fact, their grand object. It was their duty, their religion, their oath, their everything to effect its downfall. Circumstances might or might not favour their designs, but, if the object were effected, what did it signify whether the mischief were produced by open attacks or the more insidious method of impairing the Church property? Noble lords seemed to view this measure solely as a means of communicating to the Catholics all the enjoyment of Government patronage and employments, and of knitting together all his Majesty's faithful subjects into one nation, to the extinction and utter oblivion of all former dissensions and discords. But he had already shown that the difficulty of obtaining any such result arose out of the very spirit of their Church. If it were possible to unite the Catholics and Protestants in one friendly mass by any common system, he should applaud the effort to obtain so desirable a result; but, separated as they now were, and actuated by the spirit by which it was well known that so many on both sides were actuated, such a project was absolutely impossible, and the effect of the bill before them would rather be to increase and perpetuate the dissensions which existed."

Much of what has been quoted above is singularly applicable to the position of the Irish Church at the present moment. Many, probably the majority of those who on this and other occasions were, in the division, ranged against the speaker, disbelieved his prophecy of the attacks to which the removal of political restrictions from the Roman Catholics would expose the Irish Church, and would have been found on the opposite side if they



had agreed with him in his foresight. But no one can now deny that, though at a later period than Lord Liverpool probably expected, the prediction is being fulfilled at this day. The Irish Church is threatened, not with the diminution, but the entire deprivation of all her property, and the Roman Catholic priesthood, as one man, is cheering on her assailants. The religious divisions which have so long been the bane of Ireland are becoming more exasperated than ever; and though others may still believe that, if the endowment of the Roman Catholic Church had accompanied emancipation, the present attack would either never have been made, or would have been half disarmed, the priests themselves are precluded from alleging their own want of endowment as a grievance; since, though in 1812 they would thankfully have accepted such a measure without conditions, and even in 1825 would have willingly seen it coupled with emancipation, they now openly proclaim their resolution to reject it if offered. Whether they would persist in that rejection may be doubted; but there can be no question that their conduct at this moment is a faithful and minute fulfilment of Lord Liverpool's prediction that the concession of political power to the Roman Catholic laity would be turned to the destruction of the Protestant Irish Church.

Lord Liverpool, however, did in fact now regard the endowment of the Roman Catholic priesthood, in ever so limited a degree, with even greater disapproval than the removal of political disabilities from the laity, and the last paragraphs of his speech refer to the resolution lately passed by the House of Commons in favour of such endowment. He pronounced such a measure still more unconstitutional; so unconstitutional that he even doubted whether the King could conscientiously sanction it. He took care, while expressing this doubt, to exonerate himself from all suspicion of leaning to that fatal interpretation of the coronation oath which, in defiance of Lord Kenyon and Lord Eldon, the unscrupulous Loughborough had

persuaded George III. to adopt. But he drew a wide distinction between civil enactments and those which related to ecclesiastical establishments. "He could not consider the coronation oath as any obstacle to the removal of the civil and political disabilities of the Catholics. The oath was an oath to protect the Established Church and clergy of the realm. The removal of the disabilities might possibly affect the Church, but it could only do so consequentially. Many wise and good men were of opinion that it would strengthen the Church; and, if Parliament should present a bill to the King grounded upon this assumption, he did not see how the King could be advised to consider it at variance with the obligations of the oath which he had taken. But the question as to the establishment of the Catholic religion by law was of a very different nature. The Catholic Church in Ireland professed to be a national, and not a missionary Church. The bishoprics and parishes were the same, or very nearly the same, as the bishoprics and parishes of the Established Church. The Catholic bishops claimed a parity of spiritual jurisdiction with the bishops; their parish priests claimed a parity of spiritual rights and duties with the parochial clergy of the Establishment. It was for Parliament, therefore, seriously to consider whether the King could consent to establish by law such a Church as that now claiming to exist in Ireland under the designation of the Irish Roman Catholic Church, consistently with the obligation 'to preserve unto the bishops and clergy of this realm, and to the Churches committed to their charge, all such rights and privileges as by law do or shall appertain unto them or any of them.'"

Not to mention that the last sentence seems expressly to reserve the possibility of the existing law being altered, and a power to alter it, it may be doubted whether the great lawyers who advised George III. that his coronation oath was no obstacle to his sanctioning Catholic Emancipation, the most distinguished of whom was still an adviser of the Crown in a post of higher responsibility

than he filled at that time, would have upheld Lord Liverpool in the distinction which he here took between civil and ecclesiastical questions, and the degree in which the oath, while leaving the royal will and conscience at liberty on the one, fettered and bound it on the other. It would seem, rather, that both must rest on one and the same ground, that the first principle of the Constitution is the omnipotence of Parliament; and that Parliament, which certainly has power to remodel the oath to be taken by a future sovereign, has power also to vary or qualify the interpretation to be affixed to an oath already taken. In fact, the oath is taken to the people, and, in the eye of the Constitution, Parliament is the people. It is true that Parliament does not consist of the two Houses only, but that the King is a constituent and necessary part of that august body. But if they, as the representatives of the subjects in all their orders of Clergy, Nobles, and Commons, are at liberty to frame new laws or to remodel old ones, it seems impossible to contend that the King himself enjoys less freedom of action than the two Houses, or is forbidden by his coronation oath to consent to any alteration of the laws which they, by their moral obligation to their country, are not precluded from making. It is impossible to exclude from the question how an oath should be interpreted, all consideration of the intention of him who imposes it; and if, in the ordinary transactions of life, the giver of a promise may honestly accept from the receiver of it a release from the whole or from any part of the obligation incurred by that promise, it is not easy to see that the principle can depend on the greater or smaller importance of the subject-matter.

Recent occurrences may excuse the addition of the remark that, while thus protesting against the endowment of the Roman Catholic clergy, and enforcing his protest by every argument which experience or ingenuity could suggest, Lord Liverpool never thought of arguing that the existing Parliament was not competent to pass such a

measure, on the ground that it had never been thought of when the existing House of Commons was elected. Such a doctrine would reduce the members from the proud position of representatives of a nation to the comparatively degraded condition of delegates of a single constituency, a condition which Burke repudiated with just and constitutional disdain, and which, if apparently sanctioned by hasty expressions struck out in the heat of debate, would never be adopted by the deliberate judgment of any one versed either in the history of the kingdom or the principles of the Constitution.

The closing sentences of the Prime Minister's speech, though referring chiefly to the past, were as strikingly applicable to circumstances of the present day as those in which he predicted the future results of the proposals which he was resisting. Having reiterated his belief that the bill before the House would be so far from being "a measure of peace and conciliation, that its natural tendency was to increase dissensions and to create discord even where discord did not previously exist, he entreated their lordships to consider the aspect of the times in which they lived. It was their fate to hear doctrines openly promulgated which were as novel as they were mischievous. The people were now taught, in elaborate publications, to consider that the world had gained nothing whatever by the Reformation. Could the House be aware of this, and not see that a great and powerful engine was at work to effect the object of re-establishing the Catholic religion throughout these kingdoms? And, if once established, should we not revert to a state of ignorance, with all its barbarous and direful consequences? For the last hundred and thirty years the country had enjoyed a state of religious peace, a blessing which had arisen out of the wisdom of our laws. Those laws granted toleration to all religious creeds, at the same time that they maintained a just, a reasonable, and a moderate superiority in favour of the Established Church. Their lordships were



now called upon to put Protestants and Roman Catholics upon the same footing ; and, if they consented to do this, certain he was that the consequence would be religious dissension, and not religious peace."

The last argument was the most forcible of all that were, or that could be adduced for the rejection of the bill ; but the effect of the speech as a whole was so great that though Lord Liverpool's colleague, the President of the Council, declared himself unconvinced by it, the House, voting in greater numbers than in 1821,<sup>1</sup> followed the Prime Minister by a greater majority than on that occasion. The division list showed 178 against the bill, and 130 in favour of it. And it was probably the decisive character of such a vote, coupled with the allusions of Lord Liverpool to the scheme propounded by Lord F. Gower, that prevented any attempt being made to give effect to that resolution.

The danger which he anticipated from such legislation was not the only one against which his warning voice was raised in the course of the session : and, instead of forty years being required to justify his forebodings, the very year in which he was speaking did not elapse without many having reason to repent their neglect of his admonitions. The prosperity of recent years had given rise to an amount of speculation such as had not been witnessed in the kingdom since the bursting of the South Sea Bubble. Joint-stock companies were formed in such numbers that the capital invested in them was stated in Parliament to exceed two hundred millions of money, and some of the objects by which they promised riches to their subscribers were such as might almost seem to show that the practical business-like prudence of English merchants had altogether disappeared : such as could excite no feeling but that of ridicule, were it not checked by sympathy for the ruin which fell upon so many victims. One company actually sent out skates and warming-pans to the tropics ; skates for lakes which had never been frozen, warming-pans for

<sup>1</sup> The division in 1821 was 159 *vs.* 120.

beds on which a single blanket could rarely be endured. One enterprising association desired to teach the people of Buenos Ayres to eat butter, and despatched a bevy of milkmaids and dairymaids to the mouth of the Plata to find that wild buffaloes would not willingly stand still to be milked; that, when their ferocity had been subdued to acquiescence in that novel operation, the sun turned the butter almost faster than they could churn it, and that, whether it were sweet or rancid, the Buenos Ayreans preferred oil.

Lord Liverpool saw clearly, it may be said was the very first to see the peril not only to individuals, but to the whole country, from the blind indulgence of this craving for sudden wealth. He saw too his own duty as Prime Minister, and therefore took, or (to use his own language when the next year he referred to his conduct on this occasion) he "created" the opportunity of some petitions being presented against one company to "set the public right as to the situation in which they stood. In a moment like the present, of profound peace, and when the interest of money was low, it was to be expected that speculation would exist in a very considerable degree. But he wished it to be clearly understood that those persons who now engaged in joint-stock companies or other enterprises, entered on their speculations at their own peril and risk. He thought it his duty to declare that he would never advise the introduction of any bill for their relief; on the contrary, if any such measure were proposed he would oppose it, and he hoped Parliament would reject it. He felt himself particularly called on to make this declaration because he understood that, in different parts of the country, endeavours were making by means of the country bankers to enable persons to embark in speculations the object of which they could not know. He would be one of the last men ever to interfere, by legislative provisions, with the property of individuals, or to endeavour by any means to prevent men from spending their money as they

pleased. But, as the consequences of the present extensive speculations might be very serious, he thought, filling the situation which he did, that he should not discharge his duty if he did not give that warning, and say that he should be found, in common with their lordships, determined not give relief or listen to any claims made on account of distress arising from such sort of speculations. In stating his opinion, it was in reference to no particular measure, but to that general spirit of speculation which was going beyond all bounds, and was likely to bring the greatest mischief on numerous individuals."

To foresee ruin from enterprises of which those that have been mentioned were a sample might require no great foresight; but to give this timely caution was the act of a minister at once prudent, benevolent, and vigilant. That it was but little heeded in the fever of sanguineness which existed at the moment he himself was hardly surprised, however greatly he might regret it; but, when the crisis which he thus foretold came, no one could reproach the Government with not having done its best to avert it; and the course of the Administration was rendered easier by the conduct now pursued by its head.

If personal annoyance could counterbalance what a prime minister looks on as contributing to the strength of his Administration, Lord Liverpool must have begun to doubt whether he had consulted his own comfort in securing the alliance of the Grenvilles. We have seen that the Duke of Buckingham, as the head of that family, had advanced a claim for official employment of some kind as a recognition of his importance to which he was absolutely entitled. He was not inclined to be difficult to please; conceiving his qualifications such as rendered him nearly as fit for one post as for another, (as indeed they did,) he had formerly asked either for a secretaryship of state, or for the Government of Ireland, or for that of India. And in this year, when the directors of the Company professed to be dissatisfied with Lord Amherst's management of the Burmese war, and

also with his conduct on the occasion of a mutiny which had broken out in some native regiments at Barrakpore in the previous year; and under the influence of that feeling had passed resolutions which seemed likely to result in his recall, the Duke resumed his desire to be invested with the semi-regal dignity of Governor of Bengal, and demanded the appointment in a tone which could hardly be characterised as other than imperious; going at last so far as to make a personal appeal to the King against the neglect with which he fancied himself treated by his ministers. It happened somewhat unluckily that the member who had been introduced into the Cabinet as the representative of his interest had under his charge the Indian department. Whatever may have been his estimate of his abilities, Mr. Wynne in his heart did not think the Duke adapted by his habits for so arduous an office in so trying a climate; but felt that his private obligations imposed on him the duty of furthering his desire as far as he might be able. Lord Liverpool, however, was not inclined to assent to the removal of Lord Amherst. He learnt from the Duke of Wellington, whom he consulted, as he informed the directors, both as a soldier and as a man acquainted above most others in the King's service with India, that, in his judgment, no fault whatever was imputable to the Governor-General for the manner in which the war had been conducted; while it seemed reasonable to calculate on a successful issue to the operations which were being carried on, an expectation which was fully justified by the event. And his own opinion, on an examination of the whole case, was that Lord Amherst's failure, if failure there had been, was rather in the general management of those observances and petty details on which popularity is in a great degree based, than in the policy or conduct of the war; and that it was only through this neglect or want of tact that he had lost the public confidence: a matter of no light importance anywhere, but of especial moment in India. But, though he thought this circumstance might



render it desirable to recall Lord Amherst, it relieved him from the necessity of at once superseding him, as might have been requisite if the prospects of the campaign were at stake. The first of the following letters shows Lord Liverpool's sentiments on the character and prospects of the war before he had any opportunity of obtaining the Duke of Wellington's opinion; while its latter sentences, and the subsequent letter to the Duke of Buckingham, exhibit his resolution not to allow an appointment so important as the government of India to be decided by any consideration but that of the public good. Indeed, as the matter was chiefly of a personal nature, it would have hardly deserved any mention at all so long after the time, had it not been for the additional exemplification which it affords of the public spirit which regulated all Lord Liverpool's conduct. For the importance which he attached to the Grenville connection, as giving parliamentary strength to his Administration, has been fully seen; but that consideration did not weigh with him on such an occasion, nor lead him to hesitate for a moment in disregarding the pretensions of the head of the family, and preferring the claims of an officer whom he had never seen, and of whom he had no knowledge whatever, but such as had been forced upon him by his distinguished services, and the reputation which his own actions had earned for him.

Fife House, August 10th, 1825.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have this day received your letter, and am concerned to find that the intelligence it contains is so little satisfactory.<sup>1</sup>

I have never been so much apprehensive of success on the part of our enemies in India, as I have dreaded a protracted state of hostilities, which can only be met by a government of un-

<sup>1</sup> The last despatch brought the account of General Cotton having been repulsed in the attack on Donabew, which, however, was retrieved a few weeks afterwards, when the place was taken by Sir A. Campbell, the commander-in-chief.

common vigour, and possessing the full confidence of all with whom they are connected.

I believe I told you that Lord Hastings said to me quite incidentally in the House of Lords that we had got into a war of which he could not see the end.

I never was more surprised than by the communication from the Duke of Buckingham which I received through Canning.<sup>1</sup>

I think it right to send you a copy of my answer, which I wrote immediately, and which you will see has left me wholly uncommitted. Indeed, I could not properly anticipate Lord Amherst's return, unless I was prepared to take some step for the accomplishment of it; and, if the step should be necessary when we meet in September, I think it a question whether Sir Thomas Monroe would not be, upon the whole, under all the present difficulties, the most proper person to succeed him.

I leave town for Walmer to-morrow morning, and I am going on a short tour to the Netherlands, but I do not expect to be absent more than a fortnight. I shall then settle at Walmer till we meet on the 22d of next month.

Believe me to be, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

To the RIGHT HONORABLE C. W. WYNNE.

*Private.*

Walmer Castle, October 13th, 1825.

MY DEAR DUKE,

Having now had a full communication from the Duke of Wellington upon the present state of our affairs in India, I feel it to be due to you to lose no time in apprizing you that it is our joint opinion that in the event of Lord Amherst's recall (of the necessity of which we are not yet satisfied), it would be the duty of Government at the present conjuncture to recommend Sir Thomas Monroe as his successor.

This opinion is founded upon the present state of the war in India, upon the local experience of Sir Thomas Monroe, his

<sup>1</sup> The letter was simply an application for the office of Governor-General, or rather an offer of his services, as if there could be no doubt that he was the most proper, if not the only proper person in the kingdom to bring the war with the Burmese to an honorable conclusion.

personal knowledge of Indian warfare, and upon the circumstance more especially that the most intelligent papers, in the Duke of Wellington's opinion, which have reached this country on the subject of the Burmese war have come from Sir Thomas Monroe.

Having said thus much, I am sure you will see that the preference of Sir Thomas Monroe rests exclusively upon public grounds, which are not applicable to any individual who has not had the advantage of Indian experience ; and I can only add that, if the nearest connection I had in the world were the competitor, and in other respects qualified for the station, I would not, for his own sake more than for that of the public, press his pretensions under circumstances such as I have stated.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

*To the DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.*

The Duke of Buckingham, however, was not inclined to acquiesce in the preference of a man who had no political connections to plead for him, but only personal fitness arising from great experience and great abilities. He replied to the letter above quoted with great anger and violence ; charging Lord Liverpool and the Duke of Wellington with "personal dislike to his filling the office even under the circumstances of peace in India ;" accusing the whole Cabinet of a "distinct breach of faith" towards him ; and holding out some undefined threat of "acting decisively on his own view of the transaction the moment that the intimations thrown out by Lord Liverpool should be carried into effect as the act of the Government." Lord Liverpool's reply was frank rather than complimentary ; the language was that of perfect courtesy, but, after explaining the steps usually taken in filling up such a post as that of governor of any of the Indian provinces, and the preliminary communications which always took place between the Board of Control and the Court of Directors, and which rendered it impossible that he himself or any member of the Government could have made such a promise as the Duke of

Buckingham asserted, Lord Liverpool declared that he "was bound likewise to add that, if India had been in a state of profound peace, and if no other name had ever been presented to the King's Government but that of his Grace for the Government-General, he should have considered it to be impossible that the Government could have been committed to the nomination of his Grace in the state in which the business then stood."

The end of the affair was somewhat curious. On the 2d of November Lord Liverpool received the Duke of Wellington's opinion, to which allusion has already been made, that "the war in India was in as forward a state as any man could reasonably expect; and that there was a good deal in Lord Amherst's despatch to justify its commencement, as well as the detachment to Rangoon under Sir Archibald Campbell." Under these circumstances not only did Mr. Wynne agree that the Government must refuse to be a party to the recall of Lord Amherst, but the Court of Directors themselves (whose resistance to Lord Amherst had in a great degree been founded on personal considerations, since they had been not very willing to acquiesce in his original appointment) saw the propriety of ceasing to press for his removal. The Duke of Buckingham, however, did not lay aside his wish for employment. Professing to have heard that Lord Wellesley had offered to go to India, he demanded the Vice-royalty of Ireland; and when he found that post also out of his reach, since Lord Wellesley purposed remaining where he was, he then proceeded to wreak his indignation upon the ministers by an appeal to the King himself: which was in fact a complaint that Lord Liverpool had not made a vacancy for the express purpose of employing him. He was as liberal as ever in his imputations of bad faith upon the Government, which the King estimated at their proper value; and in forwarding the Duke's letter to Lord Liverpool made some comments on the qualifications and pretensions of the "*High-riding Duke*" which would have pleased their subject even less.



than the minister's letters. Perhaps the most singular feature of the whole business is that the Duke still clung with such pertinacity to his desire of displaying himself as an Eastern satrap, that when, above a year afterwards, Lord Amherst resigned the office, he renewed his application to succeed him; and the very week before Lord Liverpool's illness addressed to him a formal letter on the subject, which contains as remarkable an instance as is perhaps on record of a man's ingenuity in representing to himself a rebuff as an encouragement. We have seen the view which Lord Liverpool "was bound" to say he should have taken of the propriety of sending the Duke to India, even if India had been in a state of profound peace, and there had been no other candidate for the appointment." The interpretation of that note which the Duke ventured to submit to the actual writer of it was, "When I last had the honour of communicating with your lordship upon the subject, you were pleased to say, that had the peninsula of India been then at peace, there could have been no competitor to dispute my pretensions, and that I should, in that case, have had the best wishes of his Majesty's Government. The peninsula of India being now in a state of peace, I confidently trust that the good wishes of his Majesty's Government continue to exist in my favour."

As the year drew to a close, affairs seemed prosperous in every quarter but one. Lord Wellesley wrote from Ireland that "the official reports from the four provinces enabled him to assure Lord Liverpool that Ireland had not enjoyed such a state of tranquillity for centuries; and that general prosperity was advancing in all quarters. Even Munster, the general source of all our woes, was reported to be in a state of perfect tranquillity." He furnished a conclusive proof of his own belief in the accuracy of the reports by recommending a dissolution of the Parliament, which must necessarily take place before the end of the following year; but Canning, whom as leader of the House of Commons Lord Liverpool consulted on the subject, while admitting that many reasons

rendered it advisable, on the whole opposed the advice on the ground that "there was almost an universal impression that dissolution now would be an appeal to the country on the Catholic question." And, as it was plain that an election, in which the feelings of the people were likely to be excited as they would have been by such an opinion, would be a great evil, his advice was adopted; and the minister decided rather on endeavouring to increase the content of the Irish by a series of beneficial measures, which are sketched out in the following letter from Mr. Goulburn, as Irish Secretary, to his chief in the Home Department.

*Private.*

Dublin Castle, November 19th, 1825.

MY DEAR PEEL,

I concur with you in thinking that Irish affairs will be one of the principal topics for discussion in Parliament during the next session, and that it will therefore be wise in us to be prepared for it. I only hear of one other subject as at all likely to occupy public attention, and that is, Slave Emancipation, and the other questions affecting the negro population in the West Indies. These, I have reason to believe, will be strongly pressed, under an idea that the popular feeling in England is with the emancipators, and they may therefore be urged most successfully on the eve of a dissolution. But this is by the bye.

I proceed now to reply to your enquiries *seriatim*, according to the order in which the report of the House of Commons Committee has arranged the subjects of legislation or discussion.

I understand that we shall again have a Roman Catholic petition, and an attempt to introduce and pass a bill through Parliament in defiance of the wishes of their more prudent supporters. As a preliminary to this, a declaration of religious and political opinion is now preparing for signature by all the leading Roman Catholics, disclaiming those doctrines which have been imputed to them. This is to be promulgated previous to the meeting of Parliament, and is expected to have, what I am sure it will not have, a considerable effect. I think more probable that it may lead to some difference between the laity and clergy, the latter of whom are always

openly to disavow even the most obnoxious doctrines, unless the result of such disavowal be to be beneficial to their Church. On the other side, a Protestant petition is in agitation ; but I doubt much whether this will come to anything. Persons in this country are unwilling to commit themselves to opinions the profession of which exposes them to obloquy or danger, and does not appear likely to advance their individual interests. Whether, however, there be declaration or petition, our course with respect to a Roman Catholic bill is clear and quite free from embarrassment.

Upon the subject of education I have, since I last wrote to you, had some communication with the Commissioners, and I find them ready to undertake and superintend an experiment of schools upon the principles which they have laid down. I trust that they may be set to work upon this in a few days. The question, then, for our consideration will be, whether this system of education had not better be left in their hands for a year, in order to ascertain its merits by actual experiment, than made the subject of liquidation during the next session. A grant of money must be made to them, which will give rise to a discussion, and we shall from that discussion better understand the temper of the public as to their recommendation. In giving the Commissioners ample powers to effect their own objects, we cannot be taxed with any indisposition to give them a fair trial, and legislation, if necessary at all, would be more effectual after the experiment than before it.

With respect to the office of sheriff, I am dependent upon the diligence of the Commissioners of Inquiry. I am assured that a report on the subject shall be ready by the meeting of Parliament ; and if not, the blame must rest on their head.

Of the other suggestions contained in the Parliamentary Reports some are matters for the consideration of Government and some for legislation. Of the latter are : First, the law between landlord and tenant. On this subject I introduced a bill at the close of the session. This bill I have circulated, and have a quire of the most conflicting opinions as to its practicability and usefulness, which shall be digested before we meet, and the bill either immediately introduced or cause shown for its non-introduction.

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Secondly, the constitution of vestries, &c. Dr. Radcliffe has in hand a bill for consolidating and amending the law on these points, which I trust will be ready for the meeting.

Thirdly, the proceedings of Manor Courts. Upon this I have not been able to get any assistance from the law officers (who, between ourselves, will not attend to any public business of the kind). Mr. Blackburn has, however, at my request, furnished me with the grounds of his opinion, that manor courts have no legal existence in Ireland; and, according as the Attorney and Solicitor-General agree or disagree with him in opinion, a bill will be necessary either to declare their illegality or to reform their practice.

Fourthly, proceedings at Sessions and the serving of process. This will require very little legislative interference, the points upon which regulation is necessary being extremely simple and easily settled.

Fifthly. The state of the laws which relate to grand jury presentments could not, in the opinion of those most conversant with that subject, be made a subject of legislation without a previous committee. Whether the committee should be moved next session or not is a question. I will be prepared to act as may then be considered advisable.

Sixthly. Emigration is in Wilmot's hands, and he intends to have a committee on that subject.

Seventhly. The more easy admission of persons to their freedom in corporations is, like the question of manor courts, before the law officers.

There are two other measures also, not referred to by the committee, under their consideration, viz. the consolidation of the Irish Bankrupt Law and of the Jury Laws. I hope that these, together with a General Prison Bill for Ireland, and a bill for the valuation of the country subsequent to the survey, will be ready for introduction at the meeting of Parliament.

The other points referred to by the committee are measures of Government, upon all of which I shall be prepared to show that we have either attended to the suggestions of the committee or have good reasons for not doing so.

I find I have omitted any reference to the mode in which tithe is collected. The Tithe Composition Act works so well that an

amendment of that Act will, in some few particulars, I think, satisfy that recommendation of the committee.

I think I have now put before you a very respectable bill of fare for the next session. You may think that we have been dilatory in not having more bills actually in a state to be presented to you ; but, until the lawyers assemble in Dublin, it is scarce possible to get any legal assistance, and even now it is next to impossible to get an hour's conversation with either the Attorney or Solicitor-General. The subjects, however, adverted to by the committees have not escaped my notice, and shall be, as far as I can forward them, brought forward early in the session.

Yours, &c.

HENRY GOULBURN.

It has been mentioned that one quarter presented an exception to the general prosperity, and unhappily that was in the very seat of the empire, the London money-market. Parliament had hardly risen when the warning of Lord Liverpool, which has been already quoted, began to be verified : shares in the different companies began to fall ; money became scarce ; public confidence and mercantile credit were shaken ; a run on the private banks took place, and was followed by a number of bankruptcies to which the commercial history of the country afforded no parallel. Before the end of the year, seventy-three banks had stopped payment, and though many of them subsequently proved their solvency by meeting all demands upon them and resuming business, the most momentary stoppage could not fail to produce general want of employment and distress.

Lord Liverpool at once hastened to London, and summoned his chief colleagues around him to take whatever steps might from day to day appear to be necessary. As everything which was done was the result of personal deliberations in the Cabinet, his correspondence at this time gives scarcely any indications of his sentiments. Only two brief letters allude to what was passing : one,



written towards the end of November (before the crash came<sup>1</sup>), to Lord Bexley; in which he applauds the conduct of the Bank in diminishing its issues and discounts. "I heard," he says, "Rothschild's story when I was in town, and I certainly feel the state of the money-market to be critical, though I believe he very much misrepresents the cause of it. The best account I have seen is in a paper to which I am not partial, the *Times* of yesterday;<sup>2</sup> it appears to me to contain the truth, and the whole truth, on the subject.

"I am persuaded that the Bank is now in a right course, and that their only fault was taking the alarm a little too late. I foresee considerable distress and commercial embarrassment; but this is the natural result of the over-speculation of the last two years; and any attempt to interfere by the authority of Government would only aggravate the evil instead of remedying it."

A letter written to the King himself three weeks later, informs his Majesty that, "though the state of affairs and of the city continues highly critical, there exists the best spirit among the most respectable merchants and bankers;" and implies the writer's confidence in being able to devise some measures to calm the existing panic without exerting any of that direct interference on the part of the Government itself of which he on principle disapproved. But the measures which he adopted, and the reasons which influenced him in deciding on them, will be best seen in the debates to which the recent events gave rise, when Parliament reassembled.

<sup>1</sup> The first bankruptcy was declared December 5th.

<sup>2</sup> The date of the letter is November 24th.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

Revision of the laws as to Banks and small notes—Debate on the recent panic—Lord Liverpool suggests branches of the Bank of England—He justifies his refusal of Government aid—Malachi Malagrowther's letters—Lord Liverpool contemplates alterations in the Corn laws—He proposes to release some corn in bond, and to permit a temporary and limited importation—Lord Liverpool's speech—Lord Liverpool declares his opinion in favour of the eventual total abolition of slavery in the British dominions—Orders in Council on the subject—The feeling on the subject in the West Indies—Lord Liverpool's speech on the subject—The Duke of Wellington presses Lord Liverpool to exert the Government influence vigorously at the approaching general Election—Dissolution of Parliament—Discussion with the Duke of Wellington about the promotion of Dr. Gerald Wellesley—The Duke of Wellington's dislike of Canning.

LORD LIVERPOOL had not felt the same objection to the Bank taking steps to relieve the pressure on the money-market which had led him to decide against any interference by the Government. And he approved (if indeed he was not the first to suggest the measure) of the Governors availing themselves of the permission given by an Act passed in 1822, but which had hitherto been a dead letter, to issue notes for one or two pounds. In a few days eight millions of money were in this way put in circulation, while the Mint was stimulated to such activity that in a single week it coined nearly a million of sovereigns. The funds thus provided sufficed for the present relief of the nation; but Lord Liverpool desired to guard against the recurrence of such a disaster. The existing banking and bank-note system in the kingdom was full of anomalies and absurdi-

ties. Country banks in every district but Lancashire had always been in the habit of issuing notes for one pound or two pounds. In 1822 the Bank of England had obtained permission to circulate similar notes, but had never availed itself of the privilege, so strong was the preference of a gold currency for small transactions in the metropolis ; which the inhabitants of Liverpool, Manchester, and the other great towns in Lancashire shared so fully, that they refused to receive any provincial paper, and the circulation in that district was confined to Bank of England notes and gold, so that in some counties a currency was in use which could gain no admittance into others. Again, "the system of law as to banks" was, as Lord Liverpool expressed himself in one of his speeches in this session, "one of the most absurd which had ever been invented. It was in the teeth of all sound policy and of common sense." The charter of the Bank of England provided (as a privilege to that body) that it should not be lawful for any banking company to consist of more than six partners, while yet no restriction whatever was placed upon the establishment of a bank by a single individual. No precaution was taken to prevent such a business from being commenced by men without sufficient capital, or even by those whose original object might be fraud. In Lord Liverpool's view, the main causes of the recent evils were to be found in these facts, and in others which flowed from them, such as the facilities which, in order to obtain customers, the country banks granted to speculators. And the remedy, therefore, which he proposed, was intended both to limit the powers of such establishments and also to encourage the formation of a more substantial class of banks by some new regulations respecting joint stock companies. All his colleagues did not at first agree with him, and Lord Bexley in particular addressed to him an elaborate paper tending to exonerate the country banks in a great degree, by tracing what had happened to deeper and earlier causes : to the manner in which the cessation of t capital of some of the uses to

which it had of late been put, unavoidably stimulated speculation of all kinds.

*Memorandum by LORD BEXLEY.*

11th January, 1826.

Though in general I concur both in the reasoning and the practical recommendations of the papers which Herries put into my hands, there are some points on which I think it necessary to explain my opinion. In the first place, I think it lays too great a stress upon the issues of country banks as the cause of the late alarm, and the commercial embarrassments still subsisting. That the incautious issues of those banks have at the same time involved many of them in ruin, and contributed to increase the general difficulties, I have no doubt ; but I think those issues were themselves rather the effect of a more general and extensive cause, affecting the commercial and monied transactions of the country.

The crisis which lately threatened us, and from which we have not yet completely escaped, seems to me more to resemble that of France in 1719, and of England in 1720, than anything which has happened more recently. In those cases indeed the Governments of France and England availed themselves of (if they did not encourage) the popular delusion for the sake of promoting great financial arrangements. From this disgraceful circumstance the present state of our country is completely free, but in other respects it strongly resembles that of the periods I have alluded to. In all of them the evil seems to have arisen from the coincidence of growing national prosperity with political events which strongly tended to encourage speculation.

The Mississippi scheme, and the South Sea scheme, held out prospects of great though undefined commercial profits ; and the first adventurers were probably sincere in their expectations. The spirit of speculation thus excited, diffused itself in a multitude of collateral *bubbles*, the projectors of which had no other object than that of immediate gambling.

In the present instance we must remember that the annual loans, so long contracted by this Government, had kept a large monied capital afloat, applicable, when required, to the purposes of the state. When this Government ceased to be a borrower, many foreign Governments were eager to avail themselves of this



resource. The parties who engaged in these foreign loans were the same who had taken the lead in our own, and their first enterprises were highly successful. But to loans on the credit of solid Governments succeeded others of doubtful security, or no security at all, South American, Spanish, and Greek loans.

Still the spirit of adventure was kept up, and, when new foreign loans began to be discredited, commercial and mining speculations of all sorts, at home and abroad, began to take their place. This was powerfully encouraged by the gradual emancipation and ultimate recognition of the states formerly composing Spanish America, which excited a spirit of speculation directed to precisely the same objects, and the same regions, as those of the old South Sea project.

In all these cases, the allurements of payment by distant instalments, and the prospect of early sales at a high premium, enticed adventurers to embark far beyond their means of real property. It is unnecessary to point out in how many ways these foreign adventurers, both in loans and of other kinds, contributed to encourage manufacturing speculations at home, and to what a degree they must have promoted a general rapidity of circulation, and extension of credit. We must not however forget, that the measures of Government in repealing prohibitions, and giving facilities to commerce in various ways (however judicious in themselves), had a direct tendency to promote the general spirit of speculation.

These causes would I believe have produced, a little sooner or later, a crisis such as we have experienced, even if our currency had been wholly metallic, as in fact it was, except the small circulation of the Bank of England, in 1720, when a similar crisis took place. The country banks did not then exist; and in 1793 and 1797, when great difficulties again occurred, though from very different causes, they were not allowed to issue 1*l.* and 2*l.* notes, which now form the greater part of their circulation. It is, however, true that the circumstances I have described strongly tempted the country banks to immoderate and incautious issues of their paper, and that the alarm occasioned by the discredit of some considerable banks was one of the chief immediate causes of the late difficulties.



How far those issues, by occasioning a redundant circulation, might affect the foreign exchanges, I think doubtful, because I see so many co-operating causes ; especially the foreign loans, and the increased facilities given to the import of foreign commodities. But, though somewhat differing in the degree of importance which the memorandum attaches to the circulation of the country banks, I have always strongly felt the propriety of regulating it. It was much against my inclination that the prohibition of the issue of notes under 5*l*. was suspended beyond the period of two years from the resumption of cash payments. I do not, however, think it can now be re-enacted without allowing at least two or three years before it is to be enforced. Even with such a limitation it would be an important step towards the restoration of a metallic circulation in the country, and the Bank of England has always been so anxious to encourage such a circulation, that it is possible the court of Directors might think such a measure a sufficient inducement for consenting to a modification of the restraints upon banking companies in England. I am friendly to such a modification, though I think it would not alone produce all the good which seems to be expected from it. The superiority of the Scotch banks must be derived from other circumstances in their constitution and management. For the mere multiplication of partners is so far from being a security for the good conduct of the concern, that it has a tendency to throw the entire management into the hands of a few directors, who may employ it for their own purposes, as has in fact been the fate of abundance of companies. If at the same time the responsibility of the partners is unlimited, it must strongly deter men of substantial property from embarking in such concerns ; for what prudent man will expose his whole property to any degree of risk, for the sake of improving the income of a small part of it ? How far it may be proper to remove this difficulty by granting charters of incorporation, it may be proper for the Government to consider some years hence, but I think it can hardly be expected that the Bank of England will now consent to their being granted, unless indeed a prolongation of their charter was to be held out as an inducement ; and whether Parliament would either now, or at any future time, agree to extend the

Bank charter, so modified, is a question on which I feel it difficult to offer an opinion. The general feeling is strong against monopolies ; but the advantage of a great central support to the circulation of the country is also strongly felt, and the Bank of England has so long held that station, that its establishment and predominance are closely interwoven with the monied and commercial system which has existed during the period of our greatness and prosperity.

As long as the Bank continues to be exclusively the banker and agent of the State, it will need no other support for its superiority ; but it may be expected that if other large banking companies are established in London, they will attempt, by under-bidding the Bank, to obtain a division of the Government business, and will be supported by a clamour in the House of Commons ; and if the attempt should be successful, I think it might tend to consequences not easy to be foreseen.

It seems to be hinted in the memorandum that the Bank of England might (at least in certain cases) have an exclusive power of issuing 1*l*. notes ; this would, however, not only be an invidious distinction, but I think experience has shown the difficulty of checking the forgery of 1*l*. Bank of England notes to be so great, as to render them an inexpedient medium of circulation. An occasional issue in times of pressure might, as it is now doing, afford accommodation, but when an extensive metallic currency is introduced, I hope it will not be found necessary.

One other subject is touched upon in the memorandum, viz. the establishment of provincial branches of the Bank of England. Such establishments would afford great accommodation, and would contribute to preserve the ascendancy of the Bank. But the management and control of them present many difficulties, and would much increase the labour of the Directors. The country banks have likewise so much got possession of the interior circulation of the country that it would be difficult as well as invidious now to enter into competition with them. I have never, however, seen sufficient reason to prevent the establishment of branch banks in Lancashire, where no country notes are issued, and, if the experiment succeeded, they might be afterwards extended elsewhere.

The late panic had not reached Ireland, and from that country Lord Wellesley continued to transmit favorable accounts, his power to send which he attributed very mainly to the admirable working of the Tithe Composition Act, "the benefits of which," he said, "became daily more apparent as it became more fully understood and was more generally extended." And the ministers could enable the King, at the opening of Parliament, to re-affirm all that had been said in the previous year of the increasing prosperity of that part of the kingdom, without the too common drawback of being compelled to lament its political divisions; the royal speech even attributing no small part of the improvement of its affairs to "that state of tranquillity which now happily prevailed throughout all the provinces of Ireland."

In the discussion on the Address, it was a matter of course that the recent panic should occupy the principal place, and the more so since, though public confidence was already restored, there was as yet but little abatement of the distress which it had caused; the Opposition generally reserving its opinion as to the causes of the misfortunes, and as to the remedial measures which the Ministry intended to propose, of which the general character was already known. But Lord Liverpool, though he abstained from entering into the details of his plans for the future, prepared the way for them by a frank declaration of his sentiments on the general subject. He reminded the Peers that, at the beginning of the previous session, he had warned the whole country of the inevitable consequences of "the mad speculation which had prevailed throughout the country during the last two years." And, referring to the opinion which he had expressed on that occasion, that this spirit had been enabled to extend itself over all the small towns and rural districts by the agency of the country banks, he supported it by a statement that it had been ascertained that the value of the country bank notes issued in 1825 more than doubled the average circulation

of that kind of paper. "Was it not," he asked, "sufficient to state that fact to account completely for all the evil effects of over-trading and rash speculation upon the general interests of the country?" For them "no cure could be found in legislation, though corrections and palliatives might and ought to be applied for the present distress. And of what character, in his opinion, those corrective measures ought to be, he would give a brief outline, thinking it better that no uncertainty should prevail on the subject. He intended to propose a regulation by which bank-notes for one and two pounds should be gradually withdrawn from circulation, and a metallic currency substituted for them; and he hoped to induce the Bank of England to surrender those exclusive privileges which their charter conferred on them, and which prevented the establishment of joint stock banks with more than six partners. The law as it existed was singular, and as mischievous as it was singular. Any small tradesman by himself might open a country bank, but a set of persons with fortunes sufficient to carry on such a concern were not allowed to do so. He was perfectly satisfied, and he had entertained the conviction for years, that the country had grown too large, that its currency had become too extensive, to allow of the exclusive privilege of the Bank of England." At the same time, so little was his policy dictated by any feeling of jealousy of or unfriendliness towards the Bank, that, by an operation somewhat akin to the encouragement which he wished to offer to the creation of joint stock banks, he desired to see the Bank itself establish branches of its own in different parts of the country. And, as in financial affairs the efficacy of measures to be adopted depends in a great degree on promptitude of action, he introduced a bill to effect these objects the next week, and even took upon himself to anticipate the decision of Parliament on one point, by ordering the Stamp Office to refuse the issue of any more stamps for small notes, a step which he had no difficulty in

inducing the two Houses to sanction as necessary, since, had it not been adopted, any firm discontented with the intended regulation might have neutralized its application to itself almost for years by the purchase of fresh stamps. It had not been without great difficulty that he had persuaded the Bank to agree to that part of his measures which went to encourage the establishment of joint stock banks in the rural districts. He drew up an elaborate paper, which he desired the Governor of the Bank to lay before the Court of Directors, explaining fully both the course which he desired to adopt and the reasons which had influenced him and his colleagues in deciding upon it. But the answer which he received at first was brief and positive, that the Bank Directors would not give up "the privilege which they enjoyed, sanctioned and confirmed as it was by the solemn acts of the legislature;" and they only yielded at last to the consideration of the unfavorable effect which their refusal might have on their own interests when they should come, as in a few years they would be compelled to come, before Parliament to apply for a renewal of their charter, and of the certainty that then, at least, the privilege in question would be abrogated; while Lord Liverpool, on his part, made them one concession to which they attached great importance, and agreed to a restriction which should prevent the joint stock banks which he contemplated from being established within fifty miles of London. Parliament had only been sitting a fortnight, when he moved the second reading of the bill, and in less than a month more he brought a second bill to a similar stage, the two combining all the new enactments which have been described. The objection raised to any clause of either bill was very faint, and in no instance was pushed to a division, so irrefragable were the arguments by which Lord Liverpool proved all the statements with respect to over-trading, which he had already advanced as the ground of the enactments which he intended to propose. In truth, his figures spoke for themselves. In 1825 the import of



wool had exceeded that of any former year in the proportion of 90 per cent. The import of cotton had risen in the same way 98 per cent. Silk had risen 31 per cent. Timber, wine, tallow, presented an average rise of nearly 40. "Every branch of trade had thus been extended to a degree unparalleled in this country: such had been the spirit of enterprise, not only with respect to gambling and joint stock companies, but also to speculations in trade, that it was beyond possibility that a great reaction should not follow."

He made a momentary digression (the question indeed forced itself on him as a branch of the subject before the House) to the old topic of the currency, affirming, with self-evident truth, that "all these speculations and gambling transactions which had been carried into every branch of trade could not have been carried to the degree to which they had been carried if they had not been aided by the paper currency." That the Bank of England had not extended its issues unwisely or improperly he considered proved by the fact that the exchanges had been almost invariably in favour of this country; and though "he was aware that it had been disputed by several men of great ability, he himself was of opinion that the state of the exchanges was an infallible guide on the subject, if it were properly attended to." The country banks, on the contrary, in a single year had more than doubled their issues; and this, he maintained, proved his position, that the chief cause of this recent fever of speculation, which had spread such wide ruin, was to be found in the over-issues of the country banks. "He disclaimed all intention of casting any imputation on the country bankers generally. His observations were all directed against the general system, and did not refer to any individuals.

"Was it too much, then, to ask their lordships' assistance in putting down so crying an evil? It had, he knew, been said that the measures proposed were premature, and that we ought to wait for more convenient and quieter times. But that was an assertion the futility of which he was con-

fidest would be obvious to all those who knew human nature, and who had seen as much of the world as he had seen. They knew that the hour of distress was the best time for the application of a remedy, and that under such circumstances it would be received with far less clamour, and would be far more likely to produce a salutary effect, than during a period of prosperity. With respect to the measures themselves, he could not deny that the withdrawing the one and two pound notes in order to substitute a metallic currency would operate as a considerable check on the supply of the circulating medium which trade might require. But without such an enactment, the country might be left in a state of perfect delusion ; the country banks might go on increasing their paper circulation, while the Bank of England, aware of the state of the exchanges, might be taking measures to contract their issues. If these small notes were replaced by a metallic currency this could not be the case. But there was another consideration of serious importance. If the country was to be exposed to crises of this nature, and in a great commercial country like this crises must at times be expected, it was necessary to provide against the evil consequences of this description of circulation among the poorer classes. Let their lordships consider what were the consequences of the failure of a country bank to a labourer. If he had a pound note or two he could not hold it to recover its value at a later time, as richer people might do, for he must expend them in supplying his daily wants. And recently many men of that class had been seen imploring their neighbours to purchase them even at five shillings in the pound to enable them to purchase the common necessities of life."

He therefore recommended the abolition of small notes as one main portion of the remedial measures of the Government ; but, to avoid any serious derangement of the banking world, such as some apprehended might result from too sudden a change, it was to be made gradually, and he proposed to allow three years for the withdrawal of such

notes; though he himself had no doubt of the practicability of extinguishing them at once without inconvenience, for there were about sixteen millions of gold coin in circulation; and, as notes under five pounds had never been circulated in London or in Lancashire, where the people had steadily refused to use any paper money but Bank of England notes, the lowest of which was for five pounds, he reckoned that among one-fourth of the population, and that the portion whose commercial transactions were incomparably greater than those of any other districts, no alteration at all would be required. The portion of the measure which encouraged the formation of joint-stock banks, and the establishment of branches of the Bank of England in the rural districts, afforded scarcely any room for opposition, since, as we have seen, it had been agreed to by the Bank itself. But he felt it necessary to add some defence of the Government for having refused to adopt a course which had been strongly pressed upon them in some quarters, that of relieving the distress which had come upon the country in December by an issue of Exchequer bills, instead of persuading the Bank to put its small notes into circulation. In a somewhat similar crisis at the beginning of the Revolutionary war, Pitt had issued Exchequer bills, and his conduct on that occasion had been pointed out to Lord Liverpool as an example. But he had steadily refused, and in these debates took especial credit to the Administration for his refusal. "He knew that if he had studied his own ease or his own popularity he could not have done so more effectually than by consenting. But he was satisfied that the Government had never done greater good than by resisting the applications which had been made to it on that subject. There was a great difference between 1793 and the present time. The distress then experienced was caused partly by the sudden outbreak of the war coupled with the causes which had led to it, and partly by the almost complete failure of the harvest; but it could not be pretended that the commercial distress

which now existed had any connection whatever with political events, or that it had proceeded from any visitation of Providence. It was allowed on all hands that overtrading had been the primary cause of the mischief, and for Government to have interfered would have encouraged the evil that of all others was most to be deprecated, the disposition of people to look to Government for aid to relieve them from the consequences of their own extravagance. This was not the first time that such an application had been made to him. When, three or four years before, the landed interest was suffering great distress, not a month passed that he was not beset with the most urgent applications for relief by the issue of Exchequer bills; the agriculturists urging that they were the more entitled to such aid than the commercial interest; for, said they, the commercial interests had the advantage over them of being able to send their goods abroad; they might combine to assist each other; while the landed interests had no such resources in itself. It was clear that if the Government came on emergencies to the relief of one interest they must assist all equally, for the proper policy was to afford aid to none except where the exigency was of such a character that no human foresight could have guarded against it."

By a somewhat singular chance the greatest name in modern literature came to be mixed up with the Government policy on this question. The Cabinet contemplated extending the prohibition of small notes to Scotland and Ireland, where they formed the principal part of the circulation, having almost driven gold out of the market; and before Easter Lord Liverpool moved for a select committee to enquire into the state of the circulation of small notes in those parts of the kingdom. But the suggestion raised a storm which he had never anticipated; Scotch and Irish peers rose at once to object to such a committee, and to deprecate any alteration in the existing practice of their respective countries, and the greatest ornament of the age and country, the most brilliant literary genius of modern



Europe, entered the field against it. Walter Scott was on general principles a staunch supporter of the Administration, but he was a Scotchman before he was a Tory; and, though he had not previously turned his hand to political writing, he was stimulated to enter this new field by a measure which he looked upon as an undue interference on the part of English statesmen with those domestic arrangements which Scotland had a right to decide on for herself. Among his works had been a careful edition and a most exquisite biography of Swift, and remembering doubtless the high place which national gratitude at the time, and a just appreciation of their literary merit since, have assigned to the Drapier's Letters, he resolved to show that a Scotchman's jealousy for his country could be as formidable as that of an Irishman. He had the advantage of a somewhat better cause, for Mr. Wood's halfpence were in truth no grievance at all, while the plan of changing an existing system in countries where it had never produced the slightest mischief, did savour somewhat unpleasantly of a regard for utopian theories of symmetry rather than of an adherence to that practical wisdom which becomes the rulers of a great country, who know that all governments are full of anomalies, and, as long as human nature is what it is, must be so, if they are to correspond to it. He had a complete triumph, the more satisfactory as it was obtained without any formal discomfiture of his friends the ministers, who withdrew the measure with a good grace, or, it may rather be said, abstained from proposing it (for, in fact, they had never gone further than the motion for a committee of enquiry), and reasonably admitted the universal acquiescence of Scotland and Ireland in the existing circulation to prove its adaptability to those portions of the kingdom.

Closely connected with the general finance of the country, and still more intimately with the question of distress among the people, was the Corn Law; and a speech made on that most important subject by Lord Liverpool deserves recording as his last expression of opinion concerning it, and



as containing a sufficiently distinct intimation of the alteration in the existing law which he already had in contemplation, and which he matured during the Parliamentary recess ; so that it was ready to be produced before he was struck down by his fatal illness, and was indeed submitted to the House of Commons while he was still nominally Prime Minister ; regulating the import duties by the price of corn in the home market, on the principle subsequently known as that of the sliding scale, which, though subsequently modified in its details, and in the price fixed on as the turning-point at which all such taxation should cease, continued to be the rule by which restrictions on the importation of grain of any kind were regulated till the idea of raising a portion of the revenue by a tax on the food of the nation was altogether renounced. The discussion on the present occasion arose out of a limited measure devised by the ministers to meet a temporary and local difficulty. The distress which had been produced by the panic of the past winter, though allayed, was far from being extinguished ; and a considerable portion of the manufacturing population of Lancashire was still, at the end of April, suffering fearful privations. Want naturally produced discontent, and, as on more than one other occasion, discontent took the form of a crusade against machinery ; to the use of which many of the artisans ascribed the scarcity of employment. Riots broke out at Manchester, Blackburn, Wigan, and other places, so formidable and so destructive that in a single week the rioters destroyed thirty thousand pounds' worth of power-looms, and were not quelled till the soldiers were called out, even artillery in some places being employed to check their advance. But when tranquillity had been restored by these means, it became the duty of the ministers to guard against a recurrence of such lawless and dangerous tumults ; and the best prevention was manifestly to afford, if possible, some alleviation of the want which was driving the unemployed artisans to despair and crime. The scheme which, under this pressing necessity of devising

some measure of immediate relief, recommended itself most to the Government, was to obtain the sanction of Parliament to such a relaxation of the existing Corn Law as should permit a quantity of corn which was lying at Liverpool in bond to be brought into the market on the payment of a low duty, and should also authorize the ministers, at their discretion, to permit the importation of a certain quantity more. Resolutions giving this authority under the limitations that the quantity so to be imported should not exceed half a million of quarters, and that none should be admitted after the expiration of two months, passed the House of Commons, and in the second week of May were introduced into the House of Lords, where they were met by an opposition vehement in its character, though diverse in its objects. Lord Malmesbury resisted the proposed suspension of the existing law altogether "till an enquiry should have been instituted into the probable effect of such a step both on the grower and consumer of British corn:" an enquiry which it was obvious could not be brought to a conclusion before, as it might be hoped, the present distress, and with it the necessity for such a suspension, had passed away. Lord Roseberry would have preferred an immediate revision of the whole question. And Lord Limerick protested against the present proposal on the ground that it must prove "fearfully and especially injurious to Ireland."

Lord Liverpool's opening remark was a justification both of the Administration for proposing the resolutions before the House, and, looked at more generally, was an exculpation of all statesmen, present or future, from any charges of inconsistency which might be brought against them if they changed or modified their opinions on the subject. In reply to one of the previous speakers, he admitted that "the Corn Law of 1815 was not applicable to the present time;" he agreed with another that the Corn Law of 1822 equally required alteration. "That was the very nature of such a question as this: it must be

always variable; and their Lordships should adapt the system to the circumstances of the times."

He proceeded to point out, what many arguers on either side overlooked, and what has not always been kept in mind since, though his maxim is as applicable to other matters as to the Corn Law, that it was impossible, or at least unstatesmanlike, to look at one item of taxation by itself; and that, in order to judge of the propriety of any impost, the whole taxation and circumstances of the kingdom in every part must be taken into account. And in this view he contended that, though in 1815 Parliament had acted wisely in fixing the price which wheat must reach before foreign corn might be imported at 80s.; yet the fact that twenty-seven millions of taxes had since been taken off, most of which bore directly on the agricultural classes, was so great and special a relief to them that "there could be no noble lord who, after due consideration, would not admit that a price of 60s. a quarter now was equal to 80s. in 1815." Of the measures before the House he contented himself with expressing his belief that "so far from their being an injurious innovation on the present system of Corn Laws, they would in reality be a security to the agricultural interest." And as to the second bill, that which gave the ministers a discretionary power to allow a limited importation, he explained that "the Government did not propose to exercise at all events the power which they asked to have entrusted to them; they only desired to be prepared to use it if adverse circumstances should render the exercise of it necessary to preserve the country from famine. It was a power which, in his opinion, ought to be entrusted to any Ministry." And in reply to an observation made by a preceding speaker, that he did not believe the idea had emanated from Lord Liverpool himself, he avowed that it was his own proposal, one for which he looked on himself as individually and especially responsible. But, though, in allusion partly to the fact that the Parliament was on the

point of dissolution,<sup>1</sup> and partly to the existing pressure of distress which indisposed men to take a deliberate and comprehensive view of the question as a whole, he insisted that "the present was not the proper session, nor was this the proper period of the session, to enter into the consideration of the general question of the Corn Laws," he proceeded to place some considerations before the House which well deserved patient reflection during the recess, and were calculated, and intended, to pave the way for the change which he was meditating. "He entreated their lordships to allow the Corn Laws to stand or fall on their own merits, and not to prejudge them. Everyone who had at all examined the matter must have ascertained that this country grew scarcely sufficient corn for its own consumption, even when there was a prosperous crop and a favorable harvest. If such were the case, what would be likely to be the situation of the country if there should happen to be an unfavorable harvest? We were not without a sad experience on this subject. In thirty-two years eleven harvests had been very defective. There was no trusting to first appearances or fair prospects in this matter. A single week, nay a single day, might blast the fairest hopes, and turn an apparent abundance into a most terrible scarcity." And he instanced "the year 1816, when, though at the beginning of June the prospect of a fine harvest could not have been brighter, before the end of the same month those prospects had been entirely destroyed, and the price of corn, which had been 52s., rose quickly to 100s., and even to 110s. It would be readily conceived what a disastrous effect such a circumstance and such a fluctuation of prices must have caused in the country; and, if such a calamity were to occur now, in the existing state of the country, it would be formidable beyond calculation. If scarcity came in times of prosperity, it might be tolerated; but when great distress prevailed among the manufacturing population, the case was widely different

<sup>1</sup> He was speaking May 11th: Parliament was dissolved May 31st.

There was no evil which could bear any comparison with this. And, without entering at present into the general question of the Corn Laws, he could not refrain from observing that he thought some alteration in those laws necessary ; and that the present could never be looked upon as a fixed system. It had been objected that Government were willing to sacrifice the agricultural interests in their negotiations with foreign countries, for the purpose of advancing their plan of a free trade. Now, in order that it might be judged how far this imputation was correct, he would state what answer had been returned to the Russian Government, which had endeavoured to obtain favorable terms for the admission of its corn upon condition of taking our manufactures in return. The answer in substance was, 'That the British Government would never entertain a proposition for any alteration in the Corn Laws which did not originate in the British dominions themselves ;' an answer which clearly evinced the sentiments of the Ministers, who, though they certainly did wish to get rid of the system of prohibition as far as possible, refused to tie their own hands by making it a matter of negotiation. They wished to look well at the question ; taking the agricultural as well as the other great interests of the country into consideration ; and they wished that a just and equitable arrangement should be come to between all parties, which should be settled and final, as far as circumstances would admit of its being so. The question, however, presented peculiar features, which surrounded it with peculiar difficulties. No man could be more desirous than he was to see the whole trade of the country placed on the most liberal footing ; but, when commercial principles were applied to corn, obstacles arose which were not easily overcome. In all other kinds of manufacture, if a fixed protecting duty were imposed it would be easy to abide by it. Whatever might be the state of the home market at a particular time, things would at length come round, and the manufacture would find its level. But it was not so



with corn, because, at however equitable a rate the duty might be fixed, still periods and seasons would occur in which no protecting duty whatever could be adhered to. In a time of great scarcity it could not be said to a starving population that they should pay anything in addition to the natural price of corn. In the alterations which must evidently be made it would be necessary to proceed on one of these principles: they might content themselves with altering the existing price, and in other respects retain the existing system; or they might fix a general protecting duty, discarding the present system of averages; or, lastly, they might alter the existing law altogether, and impose protecting duties with a maximum beyond which importation should be free, and a minimum under which no importation should be allowed." The plan on which he ultimately decided was a modification of this last idea: a very heavy duty, when corn was at a low price, being substituted for absolute prohibition; that duty again, when corn was at a price between the maximum and minimum, rising and falling by gradations corresponding to the fluctuations in the price, in order to keep the cost to the consumer as nearly as possible at a level.

It will be remembered that at the outset of his career Lord Liverpool was opposed to any new legislation on the subject of slavery; and that he had subsequently yielded to the arguments of Wilberforce, and, after a patient investigation, such as he gave to every subject of importance, had become a resolute antagonist of the Slave Trade, not contented with witnessing its extinction in our own case, but omitting no opportunity of pressing on foreign colonies the duty of following our example in the suppression of so detestable a traffic. But in this his last session he showed himself willing to go further still, and expressly declared himself favorable to the entire abolition of slavery so soon as an improved education and a higher civilization should have qualified the slaves to receive absolute enfranchisement. In 1823 the House of Commons had passed reso-

lutions expressing its anxiety for such a result, "at the earliest period that should be compatible with the well-being of the slaves themselves, with the safety of the colonies, and with a fair and equitable consideration of the interests of private property." And in March of this year, 1826, Lord Bathurst, as Colonial Secretary, moved the adoption of these resolutions by the Peers also ; explaining that, in the interval which had elapsed since they had been passed by the Commons, their spirit had been embodied by the ministers in a set of orders in council, which had been sent out to the colonies, in the hope that the legislatures there would view them with as much approval as they had received from all parties in this country, and would eagerly co-operate in carrying them out. Nor, though on some points the legislative assemblies of one or two of the islands had shown a temper not altogether satisfactory, had this expectation been on the whole disappointed. In most of them an eager desire was shown to provide for the education of the slaves in the principles of Christianity ; churches were being repaired, enlarged, and built, many of the owners of plantations contributing the chief part of the requisite funds, while many enactments had been passed with the express purpose of giving the slaves personal protection, and even of enabling them to receive bequests and to hold property.

And, in supporting these resolutions, Lord Liverpool laid down in the broadest terms that the eventual abolition of slavery was an object on which all were and must be agreed ; and that, as a necessary consequence, all must acknowledge the making every effort to ameliorate the condition of the slaves, so as to fit them for enfranchisement, to be a positive duty. He made allowance for the coldness, and even opposition, with which in some places the colonial assemblies had received the intelligence of the disposition of the Government as exhibited in the orders in council ; reminding his hearers of the great power which "prejudice and the inveteracy of particular habits" exer-

cised over the mind. But while for this reason he was willing to view with indulgence "the common infirmities of human nature, and to allow a reasonable time for the growth of reason and the subsidence of heated feelings," and therefore "was necessarily averse to the use of any language which might be productive of injury to his object," he did not abstain from intimating, in terms which could not well be mistaken, his resolution to enforce compliance with the will of the Imperial legislature, if compulsion should prove necessary. "That Parliament, when called on, would do its duty and assert its paramount authority, he could not hesitate for a moment to think."

Except on one or two occasions afforded by the presentation of petitions on the subject, the Catholic question was not mentioned this session in either House of Parliament. The opponents of emancipation had of course no reason for reviving it, and even its advocates apparently thought it impolitic to bring on a discussion of a subject so irritating to both sides on the eve of a dissolution. But it was certain that the contest would be renewed on the first assembling of the new Parliament, and the following letter shows that some of the members of the Cabinet, and the King himself, regarded the coming elections with anxiety, if not with uneasiness, on this account.

London, May 2d, 1826.

MY DEAR LORD LIVERPOOL,

I saw the King yesterday by his Majesty's desire, and had a good deal of conversation with him respecting the general election, respecting which he expresses the greatest anxiety.

Your Government being founded upon the principle of keeping the Catholic question neutral, and as far as possible in the state in which it is, and the King's opinion being decidedly adverse to any further concession to the Roman Catholics, I conceive it to be the duty of the Government generally, and of its members individually, whatever may be their opinions regarding the question of farther concessions to the Roman Catholics, to shape their course in respect of the dissolution of

the Parliament and of the elections in such a manner as to afford the best chance of assembling a parliament which shall enable the Government to keep the Catholic question in the state in which it is.

I beg you for one moment to recollect where we were at the close of the last session of Parliament. It is perfectly true that affairs never occur twice exactly in the same way. But it is impossible to expect that if there should be an increased or the same majority in the new Parliament in favour of the Roman Catholic question which exists in the present Parliament, we shall not in some shape experience over again the same difficulties, and be threatened with the same evils. The consequences will not be confined to a dissolution of the Government, but they will be followed by a difference between the two Houses, and possibly the King himself may be brought into the contest in his last entrenchment. It is impossible, then, that any man in the Government can think of carrying the question by the force of numbers in the House of Commons, or can object to your using the accustomed influence of your office as far as possible to avoid such evils.

I am the last person who would recommend to you to take any step against any friend in Parliament who may have differed from you upon this question, or to omit to give him all the assistance in your power. But what I would recommend to you is to keep the exercise of this influence entirely in your own hands, and not allow yourself to attend to the recommendation of anybody for a seat in Parliament, respecting whom you should not have a hope that he would oppose farther concessions. Nobody who sees the consequences can object to such conduct on your part, and it will give you a chance at least of avoiding the evils which threatened us in the last session of Parliament.

Believe me most sincerely yours,

WELLINGTON.

It may be thought that some expressions in the beginning of this letter imply that the course which the Duke himself took upon the question was influenced rather by the difficulties of carrying it arising from the opinions of the majority in the House of Lords, and even more from



the decided disinclination to concession entertained by the King, than by any strong political or religious objection which he himself felt to emancipation. And the more we take this view of his opinion on the matter, the more characteristic is his urgency that the Prime Minister should exercise all the influence of the Government to secure the return of members who should not be inclined to give trouble which must be fruitless, unless so far as it might be productive of danger to the Constitution, by the agitation of a question which could not be carried. To what extent his suggestion was adopted we have no means of ascertaining, but the result of the election, as a whole, showed that it was in some degree superfluous; since the success which had attended the last proposal of emancipation in the House of Commons had so alarmed the electors over the whole kingdom, that on the first division which took place on the subject in the new Parliament, the decision of 1825 was reversed, and the majority of more than 20 was converted into a minority of 4.

Parliament was dissolved at the end of May, and Lord Liverpool took the opportunity of rewarding the attachment of some of his supporters by promotions to or in the peerage. And one letter which he received on the subject from the King, puts the good-nature of George IV. and the sincerity of his wish to gratify those whom he looked on as his personal friends, in a very pleasing light.

*Most private.*

Royal Lodge, April 19th, 1826.

DEAR LORD LIVERPOOL,

I think your explanation on the subject of the Northumberland peerage, although *not* satisfactory to one's feelings, is upon the whole conclusive; but I do think that is a hard thing, both upon you and me, that Lord Grenville should make a point of driving me to do *that* which I think *wrong*, and take no interest in, *politically* or otherwise. However, let it be, for I do not choose that you should be compromised. All the others that you have put down have my entire approbation. I will now add *my own*; and I shall begin by naming *my friend*, Charles Long:



the second, about whom I am even more anxious, is *my old and attached friend* Lord Fife. I am quite aware of the trifling objection to some of the fooleries of his past life, but who is exempt from some nonsense or other? I dismissed him from my household, and used him *apparently* ill to please my Government and poor Lord Londonderry; but, notwithstanding this, *my friend* Fife never gave a vote against the Government afterwards, and by his loyal example when I was in Scotland did the greatest good. I am *much* attached to *him*. If you choose to let Sir John Leicester stand, I have no objection; and with this understanding, that I shall be willing to consider myself as owing you a peer at any future period that you may propose. Peace and harmony is my great object. You will be glad, I am sure, to learn that I am gradually improving in health every day.

Your sincere friend,

G. R.

Later in the year Lord Liverpool had a longer correspondence with the Duke of Wellington, of a kind to cause embarrassment to both, but at the same time to do the greatest credit to himself. We have seen more than one instance of the extreme scrupulousness which guided the minister in the distribution of his ecclesiastical patronage, which he looked on at all times as only to be exercised under a sense of most solemn responsibility. We have seen him oppose on this subject the personal wishes and urgency of his Sovereign. But, politically speaking, there was perhaps still greater difficulty in resisting the requests of two such important members of his Administration as the great warrior of the Cabinet and the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and the task was rendered the more difficult by the extraordinary double-dealing of Lord Wellesley himself. His youngest brother was a clergyman of inoffensive personal character, not remarkable either for any particular attention to or neglect of his clerical duties, but unfortunate in his family circumstances; since he was separated from his wife under circumstances of such misconduct on

her part as apparently made it easy for him to sever the connection altogether, which however he forbore to do. Some years before, Lord Wellesley, while unconnected with the Administration, had endeavoured to obtain his promotion to the episcopal bench, but had been met by Lord Liverpool with a statement, the correctness of which was within Lord Wellesley's personal knowledge, that he had recently refused a bishopric to a clergyman of high position and most distinguished attainments, on the ground that he was separated from his wife, and that such a circumstance, which inevitably led to inferences unfavorable to both parties, must ever be in his mind an insuperable bar to such promotion. Lord Wellesley had admitted the justice of the principle, but now, on an Irish bishopric becoming vacant, he wrote to the Prime Minister, not exactly making a formal request that it might be given to his brother, but pointing out that, as several years had elapsed since Lord Liverpool's former refusal, he might perhaps think that "lapse of time had essentially altered the nature of the case;" and urging on his brother's behalf that his "conduct during that period had been not only irreproachable, but highly meritorious and useful in his professional duties, and that he had obtained the approbation both of the Bishop of London and the Archbishop of Canterbury." He added: "I wish you, however, to understand most distinctly that I have no desire to urge this matter upon your attention now, or at any time, without your previous consent. I am not satisfied that it would be consistent with those high principles of public duty which you and I so fully acknowledged at Bath, to move at all in this matter; but it is a duty of humanity and charity to bring the subject again before you, and I assure you that whatever may be your decision, I shall receive it with sincere and cordial respect, and with the most implicit confidence in its wisdom and justice."

Lord Liverpool felt that he had no course but to repeat his refusal; pointing out to the Marquis that, as his brother

still abstained from suing for a divorce, the circumstances were in no degree altered ; that his forbearance was of itself a scandal "in the eyes of the world (however unjustly), being set down to motives which might be untrue, but which could not operate otherwise than injuriously on his former life ;" reminding the Marquis that "he had formerly quoted to him a passage from St. Paul's Epistles, which," he continued, "I now request you to refer to ; you will find it in the seven first verses of the third chapter of the First Epistle to Timothy, and I mention it as well for the reasonableness of the injunction as for the authority which belongs to it." He proceeded to remind the Marquis of the extreme responsibility attaching to the disposal of spiritual preferment ; of the peculiar position of "the Established Church in Ireland, which was from various circumstances exposed to severe criticism and obloquy, beyond perhaps any other Church Establishment in Europe ; which surely made it the duty of those who had to distribute its patronage to be more than usually cautious as to the characters and conduct of those who were to receive its honours and rewards." And, as he knew the sensitiveness of the Marquis as to his own reputation as an administrator, he finally pressed upon him that "his brother's elevation to the bench of bishops would not be for Lord Wellesley's own interest ; since it would of course be principally, he might say almost exclusively ascribed to him, and he would subject himself to the unmerited reproach of an indifference to the Established Church, or of doing that for a brother which he would not do for any other individual."

It is painful to reveal the duplicity of the Marquis's subsequent conduct. As governor of our Eastern empire, he had shown the very highest ability, rendering at the same time most conspicuous service to the State. And a feeling of what is due to such eminence would rather dictate the veiling the frailties of such a man, than the revealing them. The whole transaction, too, refers to a bygone private scandal which would have been better left in the oblivion

into which it has long since fallen, were it not for the light which it throws on Lord Liverpool's character, and still more on the extreme difficulties with which he had to contend in keeping his Administration together; difficulties arising in no respect from his own character or conduct, but from the waywardness, the assumption, and occasionally, it is mortifying to see, from the unfairness of his colleagues: while one of the letters, which will be presently quoted, tends to throw no unimportant light on the transactions of the next spring, and to explain in some degree the rupture of the great Tory party, when the Duke of Wellington, with others of Lord Liverpool's colleagues, refused to retain their posts under Mr. Canning. On the receipt of Lord Liverpool's letter, Lord Wellesley at once replied: "On full consideration of your sentiments, I cannot dispute their justice and force; and I think they are fully sustained by the passage of St. Paul's epistles to which you refer, and which furnishes the clearest and most rational rule respecting the qualifications of bishops. The strict application of this rule to the Established Church of Ireland is certainly the best practical mode of maintaining the dignity, honour, and strength of that Church." And at the same time that he was professing to Lord Liverpool himself this complete and even cheerful acquiescence in his decision, he wrote to his brother, the Duke, as will presently be seen, in a very different spirit; and it seems better to give the whole correspondence which ensued, than to appear to keep anything back.

*From the DUKE OF WELLINGTON to LORD LIVERPOOL.*

London, August 30th, 1826.

MY DEAR LORD,

I received a letter from Lord Wellesley about a week ago to inform me that he had proposed your recommending my brother Gerald for the first bench, and I have since learnt from him that you had objected to the recommendation. When I applied to you some years ago thus to promote my brother, and even when Lord Wellesley wrote to you upon the subject previous to his departure for Ireland, I was not disposed to

deny that you had grounds for objecting to his promotion to the bench. He had recently been separated from his wife on account of a charge of adultery against her, and having refrained from prosecuting that charge in a court of justice for reasons alleged by himself, which, whether good or bad, is not now worth discussing, the good-natured world might have attributed his forbearance to the apprehension of recriminating charges on her part. However devoid of foundation and unjust these insinuations against my brother's character, they did in my opinion afford fair ground for not promoting him to the bench at that period.

But seven years have elapsed since this separation, and the whispers of these insinuations. In that period not only no recriminating charge has been made against my brother, but I can prove by the best possible evidence that there never existed any ground for such charge ; that he has repeatedly defied his wife, living in a state of separation from him, to make such, and that he has proceeded to all extremities with her by preventing all intercourse between her and her children.

In respect to his conduct as a clergyman, I beg to refer your lordship to the Archbishop of Canterbury, to the Bishop of Lincoln, and to the Bishop of Durham, late Dean of St. Paul's, and to the numerous inhabitants of Chelsea.

I should be the last man to question, under any circumstances and at any time, the exercise of your own discretion in the selection of fit persons to be promoted to the bench in this country, but I beg leave to submit that when the Lord Lieutenant, in the exercise of his discretion and of the power vested in him by his Majesty, proposed to you that he should recommend my brother to the first bench, your interference was not strictly necessary ; and it would have been but fair to enquire whether former suspicions had been confirmed, and what had been his conduct as a father of a family and as a clergyman throughout his life from those best able to make a true and faithful report, his parishioners and his immediate professional superiors, before you allowed yourself to interpose your authority and prevent his promotion.

He knows of the King's favorable disposition towards him, and he will now know of the Lord Lieutenant's disposition and desire to promote him to the bench. He was made acquainted,



at the time, with your answer to me respecting the deanery of Durham, and he, with the rest of the public, must have formed a judgment how far the refusal of that deanery was consistent with that answer. Conscious as he must be of his innocence in respect to all the charges upon which is founded your exclusion of him from all the benefits of his profession, I beg to submit to your consideration what must he and his friends and connections think of the failure of all my endeavours to obtain even common justice for him?

Notwithstanding Lord Wellesley's desire that I should write to you upon this subject, I had determined that I would not mention it, and I should not have written upon it at all if it was not to call upon your lordship in common justice to my brother fairly to enquire whether the insinuations which you have heard and the suspicions you have entertained are well founded; because I felt if I wrote at all I must remind you of the following circumstances.

When you declined to promote my brother to the bench you told me that you would do everything in your power to improve his situation. I afterwards, at his suggestion, requested your lordship to recommend him for the deanery of St. Paul's, or the deanery of Durham; to which request you replied that those dignities were considered by the Church as on a par with bishoprics, and that the same reasons which prevented your lordship from promoting my brother to the bench must prevent you from recommending him for either of these deaneries. I informed my brother of your decision, and then one of the first arrangements I heard of was the promotion of Dr. Hall, the Dean of Christ Church, to be Dean of Durham!

Your lordship offered my brother a living in Yorkshire, which he was under the necessity of declining to accept, as the income of it would not have been sufficient to pay the curate and the expense of taking possession.

In the mean time I have scarcely ever approached his Majesty that he has not mentioned to me his anxiety to see my brother provided for in the Church, and he has sent me repeatedly most gracious messages upon the same subject. I have never hinted the subject to the King or to anybody who could have an opportunity of speaking to the King; and I declare most

solemnly that I feel so much disinclination to make personal interests the subject of discussion with your lordship that I should never again have troubled you upon the subject if I did not consider myself now forced to do so, in order to induce your lordship to do my brother justice.

I would appeal to all our colleagues, to his Majesty, and even to yourself in your cool moments, whether there is any man who has served you more faithfully and zealously than I have. I now ask for nothing but justice, forbearance from prejudice and passion, and fair, candid, and deliberate enquiry previous to decision ; and I am ready and willing to abide by the result.

Ever, my dear Lord, yours most faithfully,

WELLINGTON.

Fife House, August 31st, 1826

MY DEAR DUKE,

I have received your letter, I need scarcely say with infinite pain. Feeling it of importance that you should see the correspondence which has passed upon the present occasion between Lord Wellesley and myself, I have desired Arbuthnot to communicate it to you.

I can have no personal indisposition, God knows, to your brother Gerald, and I must have every possible wish to gratify you in an object which you have naturally so much at heart, and which can interfere with no views, public or private, of my own. It is from a conscientious sense of duty alone that I am compelled to say that no clergyman living separate from his wife ought to be raised to the episcopal bench.

I have the highest authority, living and dead, for saying this and I am convinced that a departure from this principle in the case of your brother might be fatal to the Church Establishment in Ireland, considering all the circumstances of that Establishment.

I am quite willing to acquit your brother Gerald of any misconduct in respect to his wife ; but the relation in which he stands to her is with me a sufficient objection, not to his having better preferment, but to his being made a bishop.

I cannot, however, overlook the circumstance that he has not taken the usual remedy of persons in his situation ; that if he

had taken it (without collusion) his whole conduct, and that of his wife, would have been before the world, and that in not having taken it he has unavoidably subjected himself to the imputation that something would have turned out upon the investigation not creditable to his former conduct. I do not say, however, that he may not have acted quite rightly, and that his conduct may not have been pure and spotless. I am willing to assume this to have been the case, but he cannot have, under such circumstances, that "good report from without" which I have always held to be quite essential to a man who is to become a bishop.

Many of my predecessors have not been very scrupulous as to promotions to the bench, but I must do them all the justice to say that, as far as respects England, they have all been uniformly cautious as to bishops being persons of good moral character, and of decent, correct, and irreproachable conduct; and, to my knowledge, numbers have been refused promotion to the bench, otherwise well qualified for the distinction, because there were circumstances in their lives and conduct (rather unfortunate than criminal) which would have subjected them to worldly animadversion.

Now as to the deanery of Durham.

It must be well known to every person conversant with such matters that, in the natural course of things, the late Dean of Christ Church, Dr. Hall, would, from his station and learning, have been a bishop twelve or fifteen years ago if there had been no special objections to his promotion. The King had a personal liking for him, and would have made him a bishop at any time. He was anxious to have done it after his visit with the sovereigns to Oxford in 1814, when he was the Dean of Christ Church's guest; but I never would consent to it, even though he had been my tutor. I consulted some of the highest authorities in the Church, as well as some of the highest lay authorities in the kingdom, upon such matters, and they were all of opinion that it was a public object to remove him from Christ Church; that he ought not to be made a bishop, and that the only way of effecting the purpose was to give him, in exchange for Christ Church, some rich and valuable deanery which he could not refuse.

The objection to his promotion to the bench was the situation in which he had placed himself from his embarrassed circumstances. This was obviously a source of infinite evil at such a place as Christ Church ; it could be comparatively of little evil at such a place as Durham ; and though I should have been very glad, even upon personal grounds, to have disposed of the deanery of Durham otherwise, I felt I was discharging a public duty in vacating by means of it the deanery of Christ Church.

With regard to what you say respecting the Lord Lieutenant's recommendations, I cannot agree with you. I consider the Government in England as having a decided negative upon all his recommendations. They may place more or less confidence in him. I have never shown any disposition to oppose or obstruct Lord Wellesley's recommendations where I have not felt a special objection ; but whenever any recommendation should be made by him which I felt might be injurious to the Establishment, or to the interest of the public, I should feel it a public duty, and in some cases even a matter of conscience, to resist it.

In order that this may be done without involving the Lord Lieutenant in painful embarrassments, I settled with Lord Wellesley, as I had before with all his predecessors, that they should communicate their intended recommendations, in the first instance, in private letters, for the purpose of any objections which might occur being stated privately, before the Lord Lieutenant was committed by any official act, or the parties were apprised of his intention.

I cannot conclude without again expressing how painful it is to me to return an answer to your letter which will, I fear, be so little satisfactory. I can only say that I am discharging a duty which I feel to be of the most sacred nature, and I can only add that, in no case of this description, where private or political interest, or personal friendship and attachment, have been at variance with what appeared to me to be a sense of duty, have I felt myself justified in sacrificing the latter to the former.

Believe me, my dear Duke,

Ever faithfully yours,

LIVERPOOL.



London, September 1st, 1826.

MY DEAR LORD,

I have received your letter of yesterday, and I assure you that nothing can be more disagreeable to me than to have any discussion with you upon any personal question. I should not have written to you at all upon the subject of my brother Gerald if Lord Wellesley had not expressed a desire that I should do so ; nor should I even at his desire, if I had known that he had acquiesced in your desire that my brother should not be promoted as he had proposed.

I considered that the Lord Lieutenant had, by his patent and the general instructions from the King, certain powers in the appointment of a bishop in Ireland, for the exercise of which he is responsible. You may have settled with him that these powers should not be exercised excepting on consultation with you, but he still has the power, and must be responsible, and your interference in this case appeared to me to be the less necessary. If the Lord Lieutenant thinks proper, either on account of that interference, or on any other account, not to carry into execution an intention which he had formed, I have nothing to say, nor should I have written a line if I had known that he had acquiesced in your opinion.

If you had ever before made known your opinion that a clergyman living in a state of separation from his wife ought not to be promoted to the bench, I should have submitted to that opinion, as I should to any other according to which you might think proper to govern your own discretion. But as this opinion is new, and is applied to this case seven years after it was first discussed, and five years after the last discussion of it, I hope I may be permitted, without exciting your feelings, to observe that it bears with peculiar hardship upon him who happens to labour under the misfortune of having an adulterous wife, and that in its operation it may punish, and in the case of my brother does punish, the innocent for the crimes of the guilty.

I am very unwilling to reason upon my brother's case of misfortune in comparison with that of Dr. Hall, or to admit that their claims could stand on the same grounds. I advert to



this part of your letter only to remind you again of what passed with me, and to show you that your view of the deanery of Durham has not always been the same.

Your lordship told me that the deanery of Durham was considered by the Church in the same light as a bishopric, and that, as you did not think it proper to recommend my brother to be made a bishop, you could not recommend that he should be made Dean of Durham. Dr. Hall, the Dean of Christ Church, was considered for other reasons to be unfit to be promoted to the bench, but the consequence of that unfitness which attached to my brother in relation to the deanery of Durham (viz. that the deanery being considered by the Church the same as a bishopric, the deanery could not be conferred upon him) was not allowed to attach to Dr. Hall.

I have no right to dispute the propriety of your decision, nor should I have adverted to the subject at all, excepting to recall to your recollection what had passed heretofore, and to point out to you the grounds on which it appeared to me that my brother had reason to complain.

Ever, my dear Lord, yours most faithfully,

WELLINGTON.

Coombe Wood, September 2d, 1826.

MY DEAR DUKE,

I can, of course, have no wish to prolong the correspondence on the subject of the vacant bishopric in Ireland, but I feel it necessary to set myself right respecting the powers of the Lord Lieutenant.

You will see by the enclosed extracts that archbishoprics, bishoprics, and deaneries, are *excepted* out of the benefices to which he is entitled to appoint, and that the King, in giving to the Lord Lieutenant the privilege of *recommending*, reserves to himself the right of objecting to the recommendation, and even the ultimate right of appointment, in the event of a continued difference of opinion.

Believe me to be, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

*Eighteenth Section of Instructions for the LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND.*

General powers are given to the Lord Lieutenant to appoint to all benefices (archbishoprics, bishoprics, and deaneries excepted). Whenever any vacancy shall happen of any ecclesiastical or civil office or place which we have reserved to our own disposal, and is excepted in your commission, you shall forthwith advise us thereof, and also recommend to us a fit person for the said place. And we do hereby declare that we will not dispose of any such vacancy till we have received your recommendation, which, if we shall not agree to, but think fit to confer the said vacant office or place on any other person, we will not grant or sign any letter for granting the same till we shall know whether you have any objection to make to it.

Panshanger, September 4th, 1826.

MY DEAR LORD,

I have not seen the Lord Lieutenant's powers and instructions for many years, nearly twenty, I believe, and I wrote from a defective recollection of them.

But they do not appear to be very different from what I had imagined them to be. The Lord Lieutenant has the power of recommending, and the King objects, with or without cause. I never thought there was no *right* of objection, but no *necessity* for it; and that no just ground for objection existed in this particular case till what I conceived was new ground was stated.

At all events, whether there was or not ground for objection, the recommendation has been objected to, and the objection has been acquiesced in. There I drop the subject; and I should not have written a line upon it if I had known the real state of the case.

Ever yours most faithfully,

WELLINGTON.

I did not receive your letter till I was leaving town yesterday afternoon.

Fife House, September 8th, 1826.

MY DEAR ARBUTHNOT,

I regret that circumstances prevented me from seeing you for a few moments before you left town, though I had, in fact, nothing very particular to say. My correspondence with the Duke is brought to a conclusion : I wish I could say to a satisfactory one ; but I must be allowed to act upon *my own sense of duty*, and if my own opinion unfortunately differs from his, he ought to do me the justice of believing that I *think* myself right ; and if so, that I must act accordingly. In this case my opinion is certainly confirmed by that of Peel, of Goulburn, and of the Primate, all as little personally interested in the question as I am. What motive can we have to prevent Dr. Wellesley from being an Irish bishop ? We have no personal object of our own in his way ; the individual who will probably be recommended upon the present vacancy has no connection, either personal or political, with any of us.

I cannot accuse myself of having overlooked the Duke of Wellington's fair pretensions as to his family. At an early period of my Administration I recommended his mother, unsolicited, for a pension, to which I must say, as his mother, she was fully entitled. I afterwards recommended his sister for the same, and I gave his brother-in-law, Cullen Smith, one of the best offices I ever had to dispose of. The chief inducement in these two latter cases was certainly to oblige him.

What were Lord Maryborough's claims to office, to Cabinet, and subsequently to a peerage ? Certainly not his support of my Administration, for I had no more strenuous opponent till I was firmly established ; and he had not to plead for it his connection with Lord Wellesley, for upon the schism between his brother and Perceval he took part with Perceval. I mention these matters for the purpose only of rebutting the allegation that the Duke of Wellington's family have been neglected. I have, in fact, done much more for them than I have for my own.

I by no means wish you to show this letter. It could answer no good purpose, and my only motive in writing it is to recall to

your recollection some circumstances which you may have forgot.

Poor Lord Gifford's death is a sad calamity, both public and private. It will unavoidably detain me in town a few days longer than I intended. I am very anxious, however, to get to Walmer, for there only have I any rest.

Ever sincerely yours,

LIVERPOOL.

Lord Liverpool had too much reason to characterise the conclusion of the correspondence with the Duke as unsatisfactory; though how greatly it deserved that epithet he did not suspect till he heard from Mr. Arbuthnot, who, even before the Duke wrote his first letter, had been put by him in possession of his feelings on the subject, and who had already given Lord Liverpool a hint of the pressure which all the Wellesley family were endeavouring to put on the Duke to promote their personal interests.

*Private and confidential.*

Woodford, 5th September, 1826.

DEAR LORD LIVERPOOL,

I was very sorry to leave London without seeing you. You had the Bank with you one day, and on the next you were at Coombe. I would, however, have remained, had my seeing you again been at all necessary.

You will, I am certain, have given me credit for the motives which had induced me to write to you about the Duke and his brother Gerald. It was, however, most painful to me to hear that I had made you ill. If you could have known in what state of feeling the Duke had previously written to me, and if you give me credit, as I trust you do, for a fervent desire to keep you and him well together, you would agree with me that it was a duty to apprise you of what I may call the irritable anxiety which possessed him upon the subject.

Unfortunately, you and the Duke are still at cross purposes. He does not deny that you, as the minister, have the right to establish what rules you please. He would go along with you in feeling that if a *man* has behaved ill in the marriage state, he

ought not to be made a bishop ; but he says that, according to his notions, if the *man* has behaved well and the *woman* ill, it is cruel to dishonour the husband for the wife's sins. He has taken great pains to know the truth, and his conviction is that his brother is without taint. It wounds him, therefore, to the very soul, that a stigma should be placed upon his brother ; and I might as well endeavour to persuade him not to perspire when he is heated, as to attempt the calming, at present, of his galled feelings. But it is Lord Wellesley who has done all the harm. Had not Lord Wellesley written in one sense to you, and in another to his brother, you never again would have had the subject before you ; and here I do entreat you to look calmly and fairly at what has happened. Lord Wellesley *names* Gerald to you, but can scarcely be said to have recommended him. By the same post he writes such a letter to the Duke as induced me at one glance to see, that with the Wellesley family the whole blame of failure was to be thrown on him, if objections should come from you. Your objections were positive and immediate : as positive and as immediate was Lord Wellesley's approval of those objections ; and had it rested here, I would have gone along with you in saying that his conduct had been most handsome. But while his letter to you must have been still unsent, he urges the Duke not to be checked by your objections. He anticipates the possibility of opposition from Goulburn and the Primate, and he applies a scurrility of language to them which I mentioned to you in conversation, but which I abstain from writing. He tells the Duke that you had taken "a most lofty tone," and that in quoting "Scriptural authority" you had referred "to some passage in St. Paul." He proceeds to observe, that if "battle" with you should be advisable, there was enough to warrant it. He suggests that the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London should be consulted, as they (he had reason to think) were favorable to Gerald. And, last of all, he puts it to the Duke whether the nomination to the bench might not come direct from the King, as in the instance of my brother. "Gerald might be named by the King, as Arbuthnot was:" these were Lord Wellesley's very words.

You will no longer, I am sure, approve of Lord Wellesley's



conduct, either as it relates to the Duke or to you ; but without going further into so unfortunate a subject, allow me just to say, that if you had written your explanation to the Duke when Dean Hall was sent to Durham, much of rankling soreness would have been avoided. It is a subject upon which the Duke has never ceased to harp since the time that it was agitated between you ; and I have constantly been aware that if you had offered to Gerald some good secondary provision in the Church, it would have done more than all that I could say. He thinks his brother wronged, and himself not rightly treated. I have had it at my tongue's end to entreat you to do something for Gerald ; but the subject has been a distressing one when discussed before, and you know how scrupulous I have been not to interfere in the distribution of Church preferment.

I have often said to you that upon principle, and from personal feelings, the Duke was ever exerting himself to uphold your station in the Government. It is well I should now tell you exactly what the Duke thinks of the Government, and how he himself is affected to it.

The Duke has been dissatisfied with much of the management of our foreign relations ever since we lost Lord Londonderry. He is resolved to be no party to what he may think would involve this country in war ; and if efforts are not made to prevent collision between Spain and Portugal, and if that collision should take place, he will, I am certain, write to you that he must withdraw from the Cabinet. If also in the management of our internal affairs measures of magnitude and importance should be brought forward in Parliament without having been previously settled in Cabinet, the Duke will feel himself at liberty to oppose such measures in every way that he can. I have the more deprecated anything like disagreement between you and him, because I have been aware, that while you two are well together, he will look to the surmounting of difficulties, and not to separation from the Government.

Believe me, my dear Lord Liverpool,

Ever sincerely yours,

C. ARBUTHNOT.

It is evident that the Duke himself did not entirely acquit his brother the Marquis of having kept him in the dark as to the true state of the case by concealing from him his acquiescence in Lord Liverpool's arguments. But, though the Prime Minister was therefore not the person whom he had to blame for having thus placed him in a false position, it was but too natural that the idea that he had been entangled in one should leave a soreness behind. And his resolutions for the future, which Mr. Arbuthnot's letter announces, manifestly arose from that feeling of irritation. The Duke's dislike of Canning had its source probably in his old friendship for Lord Londonderry, with whom he could hardly forgive him for having once quarrelled, though that nobleman himself, as we have seen, had become completely reconciled to his old antagonist ; and though Canning's whole policy as his successor was marked by as close an adherence to that which, on his return to the Foreign Office, he found in prosecution as the changing circumstances and rapid progress of events would permit. One feeling entertained by the Duke, and brought out in Mr. Arbuthnot's letter, is as instructive to statesmen to remark as it is honorable to himself ; namely, the invincible antipathy with which he regarded any line of conduct which might have a tendency to involve us in war. Statesmen of former times had not been ashamed to avow a fondness for honorable war. But Wellington, who owed all his rank, and wealth, and greatness, his present renown and his glorious place in the annals of his country to his warlike genius, regarded it with horror, and never omitted a single opportunity of inculcating the maxim that there was no price but that of honour too high to pay for the preservation of peace.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

State of Portugal, and death of John VI.—Don Pedro grants Portugal a charter—The command of the Portuguese army is offered to Lord Beresford—Canning's opinion of the objects of France—Bad faith of the Spanish Government—A British division is sent to Portugal—Illness of Lord Liverpool—Canning's speech—Entire success of the expedition—The Duke of Wellington's opinion on the prospects of a war in Portugal—An order in Council permits the importation of grain—Lord Liverpool occupies himself in framing a new Corn Law—Huskisson's proposal—Lord Liverpool's comment on it—The new Parliament is favorable to the Ministry—The Duke of York remonstrates against the policy of the Ministry on Catholic Emancipation—Lord Liverpool's letter to the King—Lord Liverpool's failing health—Death of the Duke of York—Parliament reassembles February 8—Lord Liverpool moves an address of condolence to the King, February 12—Question whether a member of the Royal Family should be Commander-in-Chief—On the 16th, Lord Liverpool proposes an augmentation of the Duke of Clarence's income—On the 17th Lord Liverpool is attacked by apoplexy—His death, December 4th, 1828—His character.

IT would be hard to imagine a stronger proof of the real wisdom which guided Lord Liverpool's Administration in its principal acts, and especially in its foreign policy, than is afforded by the events which occupied the last three months of the year. The Duke of Wellington, as we have seen, had expressed the keenest anxiety to prevent collision between Spain and Portugal, but at the same time the greatest distrust of the minister to whose department it belonged to make the exertions which he desired to see put forth. Yet, when they were made, it was so done as to extort from him his fullest approbation and most

hearty support. It might almost seem as if Providence had designed that this great Administration should be closed by an exploit of striking brilliancy on the very same theatre on which its earliest triumphs had been won, and that the last impression which it should leave behind should prove that the renown which England had won in war remained unimpaired after the long interval of peace, and that her influence, whether for peace or war, was undiminished.

Portugal had been in an unquiet state for some years. King John VI. had been compelled to banish his younger son, Don Miguel ; and when, in March 1826, he died, that Prince or his partisans renewed their intrigues against the Government. They were favoured by circumstances, for the new king, Don Pedro, was absent in his empire of Brazil, his retention of which was, by the Brazilian constitution, incompatible with the sovereignty of the mother country, and which it was generally supposed he would be inclined to prefer to his European dominions ; while if, as was also expected, he should make over Portugal to his daughter, that Princess, who was a child of only seven years old, was likewise on the other side of the Atlantic ; and, on the other hand, Don Miguel was at no greater distance than Vienna. Before his death John had taken the precaution to make provision for a regency, of which his daughter, the Infanta Isabella Maria, was to be the head ; and this arrangement was so evidently the best that could be made at the moment that, when the news of his accession reached Pedro at Rio Janeiro, he confirmed her in her office ; which, however, he intended that she should exercise as deputy for his daughter, not for himself. But, before placing the youthful Princess on the throne, he thought it prudent to endeavour to strengthen her position by granting Portugal a constitutional charter, designing, as soon as he should learn that it was favorably received by the people, to resign his crown in her favour, and at the same time to betroth her to her uncle, whose interests



would thus become bound up with the maintenance, not with the disturbance, of the Government. The news of his intentions, however, and the arrival of the decrees establishing the charter, were the signal for a renewed agitation of a more formidable character than ever at Lisbon. The Infanta accepted the charter, but a large portion of the army broke out at once into open insurrection, proclaimed Don Miguel king, and began to cross the frontier into Spain, calculating, as the event proved, that they had reason to calculate on receiving protection and countenance from the Spanish authorities. Our ambassador at Madrid remonstrated with the Spanish Cabinet against conduct so manifestly at variance with every existing treaty, and which could hardly fail to endanger the preservation of peace, if indeed it were not deliberately intended to provoke war. But his representations were disregarded; and the Portuguese regency, beginning to apprehend that they should soon have to defend their independence by force of arms, and cherishing a grateful remembrance of the hardy soldier who in the former war had given discipline and efficiency to their armies, solicited the English general, Lord Beresford, to return and once more take the command of their troops. Canning, to whose department matters of this kind especially belonged, saw no objection to his accepting the offer, but desired to impose two conditions on his acceptance: first, that Lord Beresford should hold no political situation or office in the country, nor have any voice in the Portuguese councils or in their House of Peers, a seat in which it was understood was likely to be offered to him; and secondly, that, while in Portugal, he should be so entirely considered as a Portuguese subject that our ambassador should have no title to interfere in any question which might arise between him and the Portuguese Government. Lord Liverpool was at Walmer, in a very weak state of health; Canning was at Paris, to which city he had gone ostensibly on a visit to his friend, Lord Granville; but not without a belief



that his visit would afford him an opportunity of holding private conferences with the leading French ministers, in which he might impress them with, and win them over to embrace, his own views on the affairs and mutual relations of the two peninsular kingdoms. And, as they both thought that it would be easier to win the King's assent to Lord Beresford's mission in personal explanation than by letter, they entrusted the task of discussing the proposal with his Majesty to the Duke of Wellington, to whom Lord Liverpool explained by letter his own opinion that "the return of Lord Beresford to the command of the Portuguese army was the only chance of rendering that army effective, and of checking the insane proceedings of the Spanish Government. Canning," he added, "referred the question to the Duke's judgment and to his own ; and if the decision were to depend on his (Lord Liverpool's) opinion, he must certainly decide in favour of Lord Beresford's acceptance." He also intimated his approval of "the conditions annexed by Canning" as "quite right in themselves, and likely to obviate much eventual embarrassment."

The Duke, eager for any step which promised peace, and thinking none so likely to have that result as the presence of a commander-in-chief at Lisbon whose reputation stood so deservedly high both in that capital and at Madrid as that of Lord Beresford, cheerfully undertook to represent the matter to the King ; and in the first letter of the following correspondence gives his opinion of the difficulties which Beresford would have to encounter, and of his chances of success :

MY DEAR LORD,

Sudbourne, October 6th, 1826.

I have only this moment received your letter of the 4th,<sup>1</sup> and its enclosures.

I know nothing that has passed in Portugal, nor of the state of the relations between Portugal and Spain, excepting what I see

<sup>1</sup> The letter from which extracts have been given above.

in the newspapers, and it is not very agreeable to give an opinion upon any subject without having accurate information of the whole case.

With this reserve, however, of a total want of information of the state of things in Portugal, excepting what the newspapers give, I do think it desirable that Lord Beresford should be prevailed upon to take the command in Portugal. But I confess that I think there are circumstances in his situation, in the times, and in the relations of the army towards Don Miguel, which render it far less likely that he will be able to re-establish the discipline and efficiency of the army than it would have been some years ago.

In respect of the conditions which Mr. Canning has attached to the permission to be given to Lord Beresford to go to Portugal, I conceive that the first had better be omitted, if it is thought important that Lord Beresford should assume the command of the Portuguese army. I know that his lordship always thought that, in time of peace at least, he could not perform his duty by the state, or by the army, if he was not Minister of the War Department; and in that character he might be called upon for his advice. I think the second condition quite necessary; and, indeed, I conceive that in proportion as this condition will be rendered clear and effectual to the extent of Lord Beresford divesting himself entirely of his character as an Englishman, and of his connection with the Government of this country, will the first become unnecessary.

However, as Mr. Canning considers both conditions important, I will send the proposition to the King with both; and if Mr. Canning should alter his opinion regarding the first, his answer will probably have arrived before I shall have to write to Lord Beresford. But if it should not, I will send the proposition to Lord Beresford as it has come from Mr. Canning. I enclose the note which I have taken of Mr. Canning's propositions, which I will send to the King.

Ever, my dear Lord,

Yours most faithfully,

WELLINGTON.

*From the DUKE OF WELLINGTON to the KING.*

Sudbourne, October 6th, 1826.

I enclose to your Majesty the copy of a letter which I have received from Lord Liverpool, and the copy of one from Mr. Canning to myself, upon the subject of an offer to Lord Beresford of the command of the Portuguese army; upon which your Majesty will observe that Mr. Canning has desired that I should take your Majesty's pleasure, as well as on the conditions intended to be proposed to Lord Beresford, of which I likewise enclose a transcript from Mr. Canning's letter to Lord Liverpool on this subject.

I cannot better inform your Majesty of my opinion of the questions referred to me in these letters, than by enclosing your Majesty the copy of my letter upon them to Lord Liverpool.

I likewise enclose the letter from the Portuguese Minister of Foreign Affairs to Lord Beresford, and Sir W. A'Court's letter to Mr. Canning, which I request your Majesty to return to me if your Majesty should approve of my making to Lord Beresford the proposition contained in these papers; all of which is submitted for your Majesty's gracious consideration and pleasure.

Royal Lodge, October 7th, 1826.

The King has read with attention the papers transmitted to him by the Duke of Wellington, and which he now returns.

The King is entirely of the same opinion as the Duke of Wellington with regard to the propriety of the second condition proposed by Mr. Canning.

The King doubts Marshal Beresford's acceptance of the command of the Portuguese army, if hampered with the first condition; and therefore, if Mr. Canning considers it is *of great importance* that the command should be taken by Lord Beresford, probably Mr. Canning will reconsider the first proposition.

The King desires that the Duke of Wellington will communicate the contents of this letter to Mr. Canning and Lord Liverpool.

G. R.

It will be seen that neither the Duke nor the King wholly approved of Canning's first condition; and the subjoined letters show that, on reconsidering that part of the question, Lord Liverpool too was not without doubts whether it would not introduce difficult and unnecessary complications into the transaction.

*Most secret.*

Walmer Castle, October 10th, 1826.

MY DEAR DUKE,

I have received your letter this morning, together with your correspondence with the King, and your letter to Lord Beresford.

I shall forward them to Canning by the mail of this evening. I have written to him to recommend to him to modify his first condition; it may be quite impossible to draw an absolute line between the military and political discretion; I shall be quite satisfied if Lord Beresford is *not* a member of Legislature, and if it is understood that he is only to be called to council when his military situation may render it necessary.

I sincerely hope Lord Beresford will accept, though I admit all you say of the change of circumstances in the course of the last two or three years. His very name, however, would create confidence in Portugal, and give serious apprehensions to the Spanish Government and nation.

I trust Charles X. will yet be induced to recall De Moustier.<sup>1</sup> In other respects the French Government appear to be acting fairly and honourably; and if our respective missions at Madrid would co-operate cordially, we might surely be able to prevent the two countries from coming to extremities.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

*Most secret.*

Walmer Castle, October 9th, 1826.

MY DEAR CANNING,

Since I wrote to you last night, I have received the enclosed communication from the Duke of Wellington.

I sincerely hope Lord Beresford will accept the command of the

<sup>1</sup> The Marquis de Moustier, the French envoy at Madrid, who was intriguing against us with great activity.

Portuguese army, for upon it I think now may mainly depend the safety and independence of Portugal. Although I think the first condition in your letter, properly explained, *right* and *reasonable*, I would rather withdraw it than lose the advantages of Lord Beresford's services at the present moment ; for if Lord Beresford is to be considered as a Portuguese subject, and the British ambassador is not to interfere in any difference which may occur between Lord Beresford and the Portuguese Government, the British Government would be absolved from any participation in his *acts*, though they might not be, I admit, in all cases, free from the embarrassment (if any such should arise) which might grow out of them.

This is a difficulty, I fear, unavoidably incident to a British officer, of high reputation, having the command of a foreign army. It is impossible, in critical times, to draw a clear line between military and political discretion. I should be quite contented if Lord Beresford had *no* seat in the Legislature ; and it was distinctly understood that he was only to be called to council when his military situation and responsibility rendered it necessary.

I shall probably be informed of Lord Beresford's answer in a day or two. I shall hope to hear from you, so that there may be no delay in his departure, in case he should accept the command.

Ever sincerely yours,

LIVERPOOL.

Lord Liverpool's general views of the probable results of Lord Beresford's presence in Portugal coincided with the Duke's. In a letter to Canning dated three days later he says : " If Portugal is to have liberal institutions, and Spain is to be governed as heretofore, there will be constant subjects of collision between the two countries, and the best chance of peace will be found in the efficiency of the Portuguese army." And he began to think that the conditions which should accompany Lord Beresford's acceptance of the command had better be left altogether to his own discretion, to insist upon or dispense with as he should see best, after an examination of the state of affairs



on the spot. Lord Beresford might feel that, if his powers were circumscribed, he could be of no use: he might see an advantage in their being limited by precise instructions from home. And therefore more mature reflection induced Lord Liverpool to write to Canning a few days later: "The question as to what Lord Beresford should do when he arrives in Portugal may from many circumstances become a very embarrassing one. But this very consideration renders it quite impossible to expect that he or any individual would bind himself irrevocably to accept so important a situation without the discretion of judging for himself upon the spot how far he can be of use." And the practical wisdom of this plan was so evident that it was eventually adopted; and, as will be seen by some letters from Lord Beresford himself, it was fortunate that it was so left to his judgment, since, through the vacillations and jealousies of the Portuguese Government, he would otherwise have found himself in a situation at once helpless and derogatory to himself and to Britain.

Canning, who had had several interviews with M. de Villèle in Paris, was thoroughly satisfied with the good faith of the French Cabinet; but it was equally clear to him that the French envoy at Madrid, the Marquis de Moustier,<sup>1</sup> was counteracting their wishes, and, for private objects of

<sup>1</sup> In his letter of October 6, Canning, speaking of De Moustier, says: "I really fear that the influence of this man or his — (for his private objects are at the bottom of his subserviency to the King of Spain), acting upon the weakness of the Spanish Government, and upon the irritated and alarmed feelings of Portugal, may kindle a war between the two nations before we meet." But in a letter of four days earlier he does not impute private objects to him, but says: "As if it were not notorious that De Moustier considers himself at Madrid as the organ, not of his Government, but of his party, the High Ultra party in France, who are for pushing on a war between Portugal and Spain. Their motives for this policy are, in the first place, probably, hatred of England; but in the second, a desire to rivet the retention of Spain, of which they know Villèle to be anxious to get rid, and to renew and cement a Bourbon alliance on principles hostile to a free constitution."

his own,<sup>1</sup> doing his utmost to encourage the Spaniards in a course which must lead to war. He explained the state of affairs most fully to Lord Liverpool, and the answer he received is a remarkable proof that the vigour shown in our foreign policy was in a great degree inspired by the Prime Minister himself, though he was in very weak health at the time, and manifestly feeling the approaches of the malady which soon afterwards prostrated him.

*Most secret.*

Walmer Castle, October 10th, 1826.

MY DEAR CANNING,

I have received your letters of the 8th inst., together with Lamb's last despatches, and, in spite of all the machinations of De Moustier I entertain a confident hope and expectation that your last instructions, cordially supported (as they appear to be) by the French Government and by Pozzo di Borgo,<sup>2</sup> will reduce the Spanish Government to the necessity of giving way upon the question of restoring the arms.<sup>3</sup>

This I fear is only, however, the first of a series of difficult questions which may occur, and I see little hope of a continuance of peace between Spain and Portugal unless through the cordial co-operation of the British and French missions at Madrid. Through our *joint instrumentality* peace might *unquestionably* be preserved. The revival of war in the particular quarter of the Peninsula would be as distressing and as embarrassing to France as it would be to us; and will the French Government risk such a consequence for no object public or private except that of keeping the present French ambassador in Spain? I will not believe this to be possible.

<sup>1</sup> See Canning's letters to Lord Liverpool, written from Paris in the beginning of October (George Canning and his Times, 519-529).

<sup>2</sup> The Russian minister at Paris.

<sup>3</sup> The Portuguese ambassador at Madrid was demanding of the Spanish Government the recognition of the Charter and the Regency, the punishment of the commanders on the frontier who had received the deserters, with the restoration of the arms which they had carried off. A letter from Canning crossed this on the way, announcing that the King of Spain had promised the restitution of the arms; a promise which, however, was not fulfilled.



Suppose, however, Spain to become the *aggressor*, and Portugal to call upon us as her ally. What is to be done?

First, I would issue an order for seizing and detaining all ships under the Spanish flag in every part of the world, not in the first instance as lawful capture, but upon a declaration that they should be restored in case just satisfaction was given within a reasonable time.

Secondly, I would call upon the allied Powers to use their strenuous efforts in order to compel Spain to give the necessary satisfaction; founding it upon the principle that as both Spain and Portugal were independent kingdoms, neither had a right to interfere in the internal concerns of the other.

Thirdly, I would announce to the allies that if they declined the proposed intervention, *or* should fail in compelling Spain to retrace her steps, we should be forced to play the whole game of liberal institutions in Spain as well as in Portugal; that we should send the Spanish patriots now in England or on the Continent to Gibraltar and to Portugal, and should spare no exertion to raise the standard of the Constitution again in Spain.

This is the course which I should propose.

I think you would find the allies would exert themselves to prevent matters coming to this extremity. Neither Metternich nor Bernstorff, nor any of those most alarmed about liberal institutions, would like to see England draw the sword in support of them; and yet to this they may force us.

The only misgiving I have upon this view of the subject is this: are we confident that the Portuguese nation will stand by their Constitution and the existing regency? If not, our situation may be very perplexing. But I do not think this consideration can affect our course in the first instance. We have acknowledged the regency with the Constitution, and are bound to look to it, and to it only, as the legitimate Government of the country.

Ever sincerely yours,

LIVERPOOL.

In this letter we see the decisive measures which were taken two months afterwards clearly foreshadowed and

indicated, before even Canning himself had apparently entertained any notion of an appeal to arms on our part ; while one written three days later shows quite as great eagerness for the preservation of peace as could be felt by the Duke of Wellington himself, and at the same time displays the writer's full appreciation of the old maxim, *Si vis pacem, para bellum* ; and his feeling that Portugal's best chance of tranquillity lay in her appearing able to defend herself.

*Secret and confidential.*

Walmer Castle, October 13th, 1826.

MY DEAR CANNING,

I enclose the copy of another letter which I have received from the Duke of Wellington, of the 10th inst., and the copy of my answer.

I have since received your letters from Paris of the 9th, with the original bulletin (which I return), announcing the King of Spain having given way on the subject of the arms, &c. This concession will, I trust, obviate all immediate difficulties, and give us time. It makes no difference, however, in my judgment as to the expediency of Lord Beresford's accepting the command of the Portuguese army.

If Portugal is to have liberal institutions, and Spain is to be governed as heretofore, there will be constant subjects of collision between the two countries, and the best chance of peace will be found in the efficiency of the Portuguese army.

I have as yet heard nothing of Lord Beresford's answer, but I do not think he can object to the one condition, upon which we are all agreed ; and as to the other, now he knows the feelings of his own government, it may fairly be left to be settled between him and the Portuguese authorities. He may, however, be of opinion that the state of things is so desperate, and that his powers are likely to be so circumscribed, that he can be of no use.

It is with a view of meeting these objections that I have urged his going out to Lisbon and deciding upon the spot. I think if he goes there the matter will be settled in some way or other, and that if the Portuguese Government should ultimately

reject him, it will be an advantage to us that the effort has been made. I have taken measures for securing to him a suitable passage to Lisbon.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

A week later he enters more fully into the political difficulties which he thought likely to surround Lord Beresford, and the best way of avoiding them :

*Most secret and confidential.* Walmer Castle, October 18th, 1826.

MY DEAR CANNING,

I have this moment received your letters, and I think it best to send back the messenger to Paris with my answer.

It is very difficult to be sure one is right when business is to be transacted by letters, and between persons at a distance from each other ; but I do not see how it was possible not to leave Lord Beresford a discretion to decide upon the spot whether he will or will not take the command of the Portuguese army.

In the first place, the existing Portuguese Government are not absolutely bound by anything that has passed to give him the command ; and it may very possibly happen, when Lord Beresford arrives, either that the Regent may find herself unable to carry into execution her own purpose, or that she may be obliged to annex conditions to it to which Lord Beresford neither could or ought to agree.

Now nothing could be more unfair than that Lord Beresford should be unconditionally bound on one side to accept the command, whilst the Portuguese Government were at liberty to withhold it. Independent however of this consideration, it is surely impossible to expect Lord Beresford, or any individual, to take upon himself so heavy a responsibility, without judging upon the spot whether he can be of any use. The state of the army, and even the state of the parties in the country as it affects the army, must form ingredients in his consideration ; and whatever the inconveniences may be of his going out to judge on the spot, they are necessarily incident to the measure, and are those to which we must be subject, if we think his services important.



You will have seen by my former letters<sup>1</sup> that I am of opinion that some good would be done, and much evil avoided, by Lord Beresford going to Lisbon, even if he should ultimately decline the command; but I have thought it right to intimate to him, that I do not think his going a matter of indifference, and that, having gone, he ought not to return *re infecta*, without strong and sufficient grounds. The whole of this question turns very much upon the importance to be attached to Lord Beresford's services in Portugal at this moment.

The Duke of Wellington evidently believes the Portuguese army to be divided in sentiment, and in a state of absolute inefficiency. No man can set this right in a short time but himself or Lord Beresford. There may be as good generals as Lord Beresford, here and elsewhere, but there is no foreign general thoroughly acquainted, as he is, with the Portuguese army and nation, and he would therefore have the means of doing in a month what other generals could not do in years. In short, Lord Beresford's having the command is, in my judgment, the best chance of avoiding *a struggle*, but if it must take place (which God avert) I consider success with him probable, without him absolutely hopeless.

With respect to the second condition in your original letter, you will see that Lord Beresford entirely agrees to it, and I think you would have no material difficulty in instructing Sir William A'Court<sup>2</sup> in such a manner as to obviate the inconvenience which you apprehend, during the interval between Lord Beresford's arrival at Lisbon, and his decision whether he will accept the command.

Ever sincerely yours,

LIVERPOOL.

Before the end of the year the question assumed a fresh aspect. The Spanish Government broke all its promises; even the arms which the Portuguese deserters had carried

<sup>1</sup> He refers to the following sentence in a letter of the previous day: "I am quite satisfied that whatever is the result of the measure, it cannot be otherwise than of advantage. It will prove that the King's Government are in earnest in their desire to save Portugal; and that if the *internal* disunions of the country should ultimately defeat their intentions, no blame is to be attached to England or its councils."

<sup>2</sup> Sir William A'Court was our minister at Lisbon.

off, and of which King Ferdinand had himself promised the restitution, were not restored. The deserters, now in open rebellion, made more than one incursion across the frontier of Portugal, in which their numbers were notoriously swelled by bodies of Spanish soldiers; and, when they were driven back, they were again received and protected by the Spanish authorities. At last, in the last week of November, two regularly organised invasions of Portugal took place, one penetrating into the northern province of *Tras-os-Montes*, while the other threatened Lisbon itself. And, at the beginning of December, the Portuguese ambassador, the Marquis de Palmella, made an official application to us for the assistance which, by more than one treaty, we were bound, under such circumstances, to afford. A delay of a day or two took place, from the unfortunate and singular circumstance that both Lord Liverpool and Mr. Canning were, at the moment, too unwell to attend to business; but, on the 9th of December, the matter was brought before the Cabinet, and the decision was taken and acted on with a promptitude to which history affords few parallel instances. A body of 6,000 troops, under the command of Sir William Clinton, was instantly ordered to embark for Portugal; and a message was sent down by the King to both Houses of Parliament, which happened to be sitting, to announce the step which had been taken, and its reasons, and to express his Majesty's "full and entire confidence that they would afford him their cordial concurrence and support in maintaining the faith of treaties, and in securing against foreign hostility the safety and independence of the kingdom of Portugal, the oldest ally of Great Britain." The confidence so declared was not misplaced. Lord Liverpool was unfortunately still too unwell to move the address of reply from the Peers to the royal message; and it consequently devolved on Lord Bathurst to explain the long train of circumstances which had imposed upon us the necessity of again appearing in arms on the Peninsula. But Canning

electrified the House of Commons with an appeal instinct with the spirit of ancient Rome, and enforced with an eloquence such as, save from one mouth, the Roman senate had never heard; such as, since Pitt's voice had been silenced by death, had been unknown even among ourselves, and which no more recent speaker has ever approached for a moment. It is foreign to the purpose of the present work to dwell on the genius which animated him, the last among us who has been at once a statesman and an orator; but the glowing language in which he described the position which England then occupied, and announced the policy which she was pursuing and ever should pursue, may appropriately be quoted even here, since it is in fact the fitting eulogy of the Administration then drawing to its close, to whose uniform sagacity and vigour it was alone owing that such lofty pretensions could be advanced, without becoming a satire rather than a panegyric; while the acclamations with which it was received in all quarters, not only at home but in foreign countries, proved that the appropriateness of so high a tone to the position of the country was universally acknowledged. England, as Canning now described her, was confident and secure from the consciousness of her strength: equally, if not more so, from her firm resolution to use that strength solely for the benefit of the world. "It is one thing to have a giant's strength, but it would be another to use it like a giant. The consciousness of such strength is undoubtedly a source of confidence and security; but, in the situation in which this country stands, our business is not to seek opportunities of displaying it, but to content ourselves with letting the professors of violent and exaggerated doctrines on both sides feel that it is not their interest to convert an umpire into an adversary. The situation of England amidst the struggle of political opinions which agitates more or less sensibly the different countries of the world, may be compared to that of the ruler of the wind, as described by the poet:

"Celsâ sedet Æolus arce  
Sceptra tenens, mollitque animos et temperat iras :  
Ni faciat maria ac terras cœlumque profundum  
Quippe ferant rapidi secum verrantque per auras."

" . . . . I return, in conclusion, to the object of this address. Let us fly to the aid of Portugal, by whomsoever attacked, because it is our duty to do so ; and let us cease our interference where that duty ends. We go to Portugal, not to rule, not to dictate, not to prescribe constitutions, but to defend and preserve the independence of an ally. We go to plant the standard of England on the well-known heights of Lisbon. Where that standard is planted foreign dominion shall not come."

No time-serving vacillating Government, of timorous or uncertain policy, could have ventured on so proud, so magnanimous a tone : and the course which was thus proclaimed was rewarded, as firmness almost always is, by complete success. The army which we sent out was not called on to take part in a single conflict. In fact, the mere knowledge that it was on its way prevented conflict by terrifying the Spanish Government into a due observance of its engagements. The struggles between the different parties in Portugal itself still continued ; but in those commotions we took, as Canning had announced that we should take, no part whatever. And in the beginning of 1828 our troops returned home, having accomplished the object for which they were sent out in the most gratifying and honorable manner, without contest and without bloodshed, by the mere greatness of their reputation, and of the authority of the nation whom they served.

The mission of our troops to Portugal did not abate Lord Liverpool's desire that Lord Beresford should take the command of the Portuguese army ; and the effort which Lord Beresford made to comply with his wish and opinion is best shown by the following letters from him :

Lisbon, January 1st, 1827.

MY LORD,

I had, on the night of the 30th ult., an interview with Don Francisco D'Almeida, to learn the decision of the council of her Serene Highness the Regent on the proposals I had made to take the command of this army. The conditions in fact were but two, to have a limited number of British officers, and that all the military authority should be vested in the Commander-in-chief, without dependence on the Minister of War. On this latter I had no reason to apprehend much difficulty, but to my surprise I learned that the difficulty was insuperable, and that if I took the command, it must be with greatly less authority than I had when here before. The aid of British officers was equally denied. It was thus impossible for me to take the command of this army permanently, or with the object of completing its discipline, nor would the presence of a British army any way assist me in that object.

To satisfy in some degree what appears to me to be the desire of his Majesty's ministers, and purely with the object of serving my own King and country, I have consented to take the temporary command of the Portuguese army. I see that it is of great importance to put down with the utmost expedition the disturbances in this country; and all authorities here represent to me the urgent necessity of my assuming this command to connect the operations of the two armies; as well as agree in supposing that my accepting this command will have much influence with the country and the army. How far this latter part may be correct, time will show, but I have thought it my duty to sacrifice my own feelings to those considerations, and very sincerely hope the benefits that are looked for from this step may be verified.

So soon as the direct object of my accepting this command is accomplished, if my present view of the subject continues, I shall resign.

I have the honour to be, &c.

BERESFORD.



Lisbon, January 10th, 1827.

MY LORD,

It is with much concern and regret that I have to communicate to your lordship my having again resigned the command of this army (the Portuguese), and consequently have no official situation in this country ; I am therefore preparing to leave it, so soon as I can get a conveyance to England.

Your lordship will see what led to this by my letter of the 8th inst. to Sir W. A'Court,<sup>1</sup> and by that of the 9th (of both of which I annex copies). You will see what brought it to a conclusion. On, however, reconsidering and combining what has occurred, and what I have observed and felt, since the news arrived here of the intended arrival of English troops, I must date from that period the indifference shown, if not the decision taken, as to my services here. Since then I have seen, and mentioned it, that the Infanta Regent, though not uncourteous towards me, has been cold, and never evinced any, the least anxiety for my taking this command, nor since then has she ever broached or wished to speak on the subject ; and I really believe that Don Francisco d'Almeida has been the only person in the Government that has been earnest for it: and I have pretty strong ground for thinking that the Ministry in general were against it ; as when, after the knowledge of the coming of the English troops, I proposed to serve, and gave the conditions on which I would to Francisco d'Almeida, the principal one having been acceded to on my first arrival, he did not appear to doubt the granting of the same, but, when submitted to the council, they were both rejected. It was then that, to cut the

<sup>1</sup> These two letters alluded to, contain an enumeration of promises made to Lord Beresford by the Marquis de Valença, the War Minister at Lisbon, and immediately broken with such appearance of studied slight and contumely as rendered it impossible for him any longer to maintain friendly relations with the Marquis. He looked on the Marquis as the last of "the Club," which "he was told were decided to wage war against him by every means ; and were prepared for the immediate loss of their situations, because, as they said, they knew him too well not to be sure of losing them sooner or later." Lord Beresford adds : "They know me, and it appears they know themselves ; and you are aware they are all the most unprincipled people in the country."

matter short, and with the object of being useful to my own country, I proposed to serve till the present disturbances were put down, without conditions of any kind, public or personal. This could not be well refused ; but it is now most obvious that it was then intended to counteract this assent, and the line of conduct adopted by the Minister of War cannot be accounted for on any other principle. When I accepted the command, I was immediately presented by Don Francisco d'Almeida to the Minister of War, the Marquis of Valença, as Commander-in-chief; and I waited on him the next day at his office, and so far transacted business with him as to examine what few returns they had, and requested that my orders might for the present pass through his office, and until I could get some insight into the state and circumstances of the army. The next day I waited on him again, and presented the general officer it was proposed to recommend for Adjutant-General, and requested his excellency would permit him to come to him with memorandums of such orders and instructions as I might wish to have promulgated, or for any object I might want from the Ministry of War. All this was very well received, and promised to be attended to. I went once again myself, I sent daily this general officer for various objects to the Minister, and though everything was promised to be done and attended to, there was no result ; and after eight days I plainly saw it was all a deceit, and that they were treating me with the utmost contumely ; and in short, my lord, I never received from the War Minister an answer or communication of any nature, not even the reports of the general officers in command respecting their operations in the field. It was under these circumstances I wrote my first letter to Sir W. A'Court, and saw him the same day ; and afterwards I saw Don Francisco d'Almeida, who was extremely indignant at such conduct. I have omitted to mention what first created my suspicions that they were not acting honorably. It was the publication of a very great brevet and regimental promotion of general officers of all classes, colonels of regiments, &c., some few days after I had accepted the command, without any communication whatever with me ; nor had I any reason to expect so extraordinary a proceeding from a Minister of War, a colonel in the army, and who had not been a fortnight in

office after I had, or thought I had, been transacting business with him as Commander-in-chief. On the subjects of both of those letters I yesterday waited on her Serene Highness the Infanta Regent. She appeared perfectly prepared for the subject, though her Highness received me most kindly. In respect to the promotion, she only said that, though it was true her signature had only very lately been put to it, yet the promotion had been for some time determined on. In respect to my views and fears, as expressed in my letter of the 9th to Sir W. A'Court, she expressed herself strongly of the same opinion, and as what was most likely to occur under the circumstances supposed. Indeed, she appeared to exaggerate the case. After some consideration of the matter, in which, as I have stated, her Highness was most particularly obliging in her expressions, she desired me to speak again to Don Francisco d'Almeida on the subject. He was expected every instant at the palace. I waited and saw him; he was vexed at these hindrances, though he saw there was considerable danger in disgusting those people who are the chiefs of the clubs here, and who have in truth, since the arrival here of the Constitution, had the entire control over the army, and filled it, of course, with their creatures. However, Don Francisco decided to make another effort, and he desired me to come to him at his office after he had seen the Infanta, and Council of Ministers then sitting in the next room. I went to him accordingly at two o'clock, and, to my astonishment, he informed me that an officer named Candido Xavier had been by the Council decided on as Minister of War, rejecting the Count de Villa Real as a person whose principles were not popular. Nothing, as I told Don Francisco, could be a stronger declaration of the political feelings of the Ministry than this nomination, and that it went entirely to the party of the clubs. He declared it to be quite contrary to his sentiments, and that he declined signing the decree of nomination, which could be done by any other minister, and he regretted that he could not get released from his situation, where, he said, nothing would retain him but his regard for Sir W. A'Court and the British Government.

From all this, and what I have besides known, it is most clear to me that the conduct of the Minister of War was sanctioned by

her Highness's most confidential advisers most certainly not including Don Francisco Palmeda, and by herself. I fear she is under apprehension of the power of the club party, and I know that the ex-minister Tagoria, and more particularly Barrados the latter of Subsera's party, retain great influence, and are constantly with her. The person named to the Ministry of War, Candido Xavier, is, I am told, a man of considerable abilities: and it is even said he is a moderate man, and rather inclined to the aristocracy than to the other party. His talents are very generally admitted, but by no means his aristocratic feelings. He was one of those officers who accompanied the French army in the invasion of their country, and could only return to it on the breaking out of the revolution in 1822. He was for some short time then Minister of War, but the feeling of the army then that which made the war was too strong against him, and he was obliged to retire. Whatever may be now his principles, it appears to me that nothing could be more unwise than to bring him forward at this time: it will irritate instead of conciliating the opposite side. But, as regarded me, this nomination was decisive of the intention of the Government. Don Francisco Palmeda gave me no understanding as much, and I immediately told him I should leave him with all possible brevity. I must, under all these circumstances, naturally wish to be in England as soon as possible. I shall be then prepared, if your Lordship desires it, to give you my opinion on the state of affairs here, which, under many points of view, are unfortunate for this country, whose resources will be absolutely destroyed.

I have the honour to be, &c.

BERESFORD.

On a question concerning war, and especially war in the Peninsula, Lord Liverpool naturally took the Duke of Wellington for his chief adviser: and the letters which passed between them, between the receipt of Lord Beresford's first and second letters, show the opinion formed by both on the existing state of affairs. Nor are their comments on the instructions given to Sir William Clinton less interesting: the memorandum by Lord Liverpool showing



in a remarkable manner the clearness of judgment which (as was seen in the earlier stages of the Peninsular war) he, though a civilian, brought to bear on military matters, and which had been in no respect impaired by the degree in which his attention had been directed to affairs of a different character since he had quitted the War Office; while the letters also afford another proof of what has been pointed out more than once before, how completely all matters were finally referred by his colleagues to Lord Liverpool's judgment and authority, and were finally decided by his direction:

*From the DUKE of WELLINGTON.*

*Private.*

Strathfieldsaye, January 20th, 1827.

MY DEAR LORD LIVERPOOL,

I quite agree in Lord Beresford's view of his own situation as stated in his letters to you, which Mr. Canning has sent me. Lord Beresford had written to me on the same days, more in detail, and I sent his letters to Mr. Canning, begging that he would forward them to you, which I see he has done.

Our affair now is to put an end to this warfare in Portugal as soon, and with as high hand as possible; if we don't, we shall have Spain interfering in such a way as to render war with that power inevitable. No man can foresee the consequences.

Lord Beresford is, as a military character, fully competent to perform the task with the force at his disposition. That is to say, Lord Beresford having unfettered discretion in the exercise of his command over the Portuguese army, as its Commander-in-chief, in the same manner as this Government have given him the same discretion in the exercise of his authority in the field over his Majesty's troops, he being Commander-in-chief of the Portuguese army.

But here is Lord Beresford without the authority which your Lordship and your Government imagined he would have; which experience has shown every Commander-in-chief ought to have in his operations against the enemy; and this authority is vested in the Portuguese Minister at War, whose name even we don't know. I might easily show that in times like these, Lord Beresford, placed in such circumstances, labours under



many disadvantages ; and that he cannot perform the duty to perform which the Portuguese Government asked, and his Majesty granted him, the permission to serve them.

But in this case of the operations of the war, the arrangement is impracticable, and may be fatal. I will put a very simple hypothetical case, which will most probably occur. The insurrection is now, it is said, confined to Tras-os-Montes, and Lord Beresford's first movement would naturally be across the Douro, with his whole British and Portuguese force.

We will suppose that the enemy detach a force into Beira or Alentejo, or that the insurrection revives in either province, and that the Minister at War orders Lord Beresford to detach a part or the whole of his Portuguese force into Beira or Alentejo. What becomes of his Majesty's division of troops ? of their honour ? of our responsibility ? but above all, of the operations of the war against the troops sent in from Spain, or of its probable early termination ?

I entreat you to consider this matter well. If we trust Lord Beresford as we do, we ought to insist upon the Portuguese Government giving him full and exclusive authority as the Portuguese Commander-in-chief over the Portuguese army, while engaged in operations against the enemy.

There can be no trifling with a middle term upon this subject. We must have this authority if we employ him ; and I don't see any other mode of bringing the existing warfare to an early termination.

Ever, my dear Lord,

Yours most sincerely,

WELLINGTON.

The French in great part destroyed Almeida ; but I repaired the place, and it served as a good port in the last years of the war. I believe that the Portuguese Government have since dismantled it entirely, so that the possession of that place is not more important than that of any other considerable town.

LORD LIVERPOOL'S *Answer*.

*Private and confidential.*

Bath, January 22d, 1827.

MY DEAR DUKE,

I received last night your letter by Canning, together with the letters which Lord Beresford had written to me. I had

previously seen Lord Beresford's letters to you of the same date, which you were so good as to desire Canning to transmit to me. Your letter gives me in some respects a new view of the matter.

I was quite aware of certain differences between Lord Beresford and the Portuguese Government, and that Lord Beresford was of opinion that he could not be of any permanent service to the Portuguese army, unless the powers of Minister of War were combined with those of Commander-in-chief. But I always considered this as applicable to the internal formation and discipline of the army.

I never conceived that, if Lord Beresford decided to take the command of the army upon its present construction, and was actually engaged in operations in the field, the Secretary at War was to be allowed to interfere with the detail of those operations. Indeed, I have always considered it as necessarily incident to the powers of a Commander-in-chief, and particularly to the Commander-in-chief of a combined force, that, whatever his previous general instructions may be, he must have a complete discretion as to the details and to the application of them, till the campaign or operations in progress are brought to such a close as may render other instructions practicable or advisable.

If, therefore, there can be the least doubt upon this point, there ought to be no delay in setting it right; for everyone must see that it would be nearly as unsafe to trust the command of the British army to Lord Beresford, as it would be to trust it to any other Portuguese officer, if Lord Beresford has not really the official command of the Portuguese army.

I should advise, therefore, that instructions be immediately sent out to bring this matter to a clear understanding.

Since I wrote the above Canning has arrived here, and I have seen him. He entirely agrees with all I have said, and desires me to say that he will send instructions to Sir W. A'Court to this effect by Wednesday's mail.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

*To the DUKE of WELLINGTON.**Private and confidential.*

Bath, January 23d, 1827.

MY DEAR DUKE,

I received late last night your letter, with the copy of one which you have addressed to Lord Bathurst.

I have shown them to Canning, and we are both rejoiced that we had in a great measure anticipated your ideas, as you will find by my letter to you, by the despatch of Canning to Sir W. A'Court, and by his letter to Lord Bathurst enclosing a memorandum on the subject of an army of observation, all of which will have reached you this morning.

It appeared to me to be only necessary in addition that I should write to Lord Beresford to the same effect; and I enclose a copy of my letter to him, which will go by to-morrow's mail.

I trust that before these letters have arrived at Lisbon, the Portuguese rebel forces will have become entirely put down, or will have been under the necessity of evacuating Portugal. And in either of these cases I am very strongly of opinion, for the reasons stated in the memorandum to Lord Bathurst, that the British corps should form no part of an army of observation on the frontier, if the Portuguese Government should judge such an army of observation necessary or expedient.

I quite concur with you that in such an event the proper station for the British forces is as an army of reserve in Lisbon, or its neighbourhood; and that to place them in a more advanced or prominent situation could answer no military purpose, whilst it might involve us in considerable political difficulties.

Ever yours sincerely,

LIVERPOOL.

*To the DUKE of WELLINGTON.*

Bath, January 25th, 1827.

MY DEAR DUKE,

I think it best to write directly to you, and you will have the goodness to forward my letter to Lord Bathurst, who will transmit it, or a copy of it, to Canning.

I am quite clear that all Lord Beresford's letters (whether properly written or not) must be considered as official, and as such laid before the King. I think Mr. Canning should likewise have a copy of them, in order that he may judge whether he will transmit them, or any parts of them, to Sir William A'Court for his explanations. The account in Lord Beresford's No. 2, of the Portuguese army, does not surprise me, nor is it in any way inconsistent with the facts which had previously come to our knowledge. But I confess I never did suppose that the present feeling of the Portuguese nation was so general in its repugnance to the existing Government as is represented in the same letter. I should have drawn a different inference from the general import of Sir William A'Court's despatches. We all knew, indeed, that the country was divided into two parties, and we might naturally believe that if the Marquis de Chaves could by a course of bold operations advance towards Lisbon before the arrival of the British troops, the present Government might be dissolved and the Regent forced to take refuge on board a British ship of war. But this appeared to me, at least, to be the not improbable result of military success in a country more or less divided in opinion, and would certainly not have led me to the conclusion so decidedly expressed in Lord Beresford's letters to Lord Bathurst.

Upon the question of the relation in which Lord Beresford and Sir W. Clinton stand to each other, you are the best judge. I should have thought that, though Lord Beresford had no right to interfere in the details of the British command, Sir W. Clinton would have considered himself as bound, upon Lord Beresford's taking the command of the Portuguese army, to move forward upon his orders, unless very strong military reasons should induce him to be of opinion that he could not do so with due attention to the safety of the British army.

It is most probable (particularly if the last telegraphic communication from Paris can be depended upon) that the contest, as far as regards the present invasion of Portugal, is over before this time; but it will be a subject for serious consideration what our situation is, or ought to be, after the rebel force, or greater part of it, shall have been compelled to abandon country.

Believe me, &c.

LIVE

Strathfieldsaye, January 22d, 1827.

MY DEAR LORD LIVERPOOL,

I enclose a letter which I have written to Lord Bathurst in answer to one from him, on two proposed additions to the instructions to Sir W. Clinton. I likewise send the copy of the original instructions given to that officer.

Ever, my dear Lord, yours most faithfully,

WELLINGTON.

*Enclosure.*

MY DEAR LORD BATHURST,

I have received your letter of yesterday, and I think it best to address you this answer, and to send a copy of it according to your desire to Lord Liverpool at Bath.

In my opinion there is an omission in the fifth article of the instructions to Sir W. Clinton. In my memorandum, upon which the instructions were founded, Sir W. Clinton, upon receiving the requisition to make the movement from Lisbon, was to exercise a military discretion upon the question of compliance or not; in which would have entered of course the discussion of the amount of the Portuguese force to be employed in co-operation with him.

The military discretion to be exercised under this article of the instructions as they stand, is only whether it is necessary to remain at Lisbon; this is certainly not sufficient; he ought to exercise a discretion in respect to the force which is to co-operate with him, and he ought to have some certainty that that force will remain in co-operation with him till the service shall be performed.

If Lord Beresford were to command the Portuguese army with unfettered discretion, the instructions might answer perfectly as they are drawn, as we place full confidence in Lord Beresford. But as Lord Beresford will exercise his authority under that of the Minister at War, I conceive that we ought to make the proposed addition to the fifth article. I don't at all alter my opinion. Our division, constituted as it is, and well equipped, ought to be *safe* against these Portuguese deserters and insurgents, under any circumstances. In some military cases, *honour and safety* may be synonymous terms; but in



this warfare, and in its existing state, complete success, and that at no distant period, is necessary, not for the safety of our troops, as they will be quite safe at all events, but for our military honour, and for our safety from the extension of the war.

Our best, indeed I should say our only certainty of early and complete success, consists in Lord Beresford's exercising his command as he ought. If we cannot attain that object, we must insist that the corps which shall be employed in co-operation with our troops, and which Sir W. Clinton shall have considered sufficient, shall not be withdrawn till the service shall be completed.

Sir William Clinton is now instructed to march against any Spanish troops which may have entered Portugal. I am rather inclined to think this is sufficient at present. This British division in Portugal should, in my opinion, be considered as a *corps de reserve*, and should not be placed in advance in the existing state of affairs, for any but a specified object. The Portuguese army should guard their own frontier.

There are several military questions depending upon this one of observing the frontier, which must be well considered upon the spot, and the decision upon which would depend as well upon the Spanish force as upon the Portuguese force, similarly employed in observation upon different points of the frontier. I don't mean to say that Sir W. Clinton may not safely be trusted with the exercise of a discretion on these questions, but my own opinion is against his moving from Lisbon as part of a corps of observation for many reasons, and it appears to me that the instruction upon this point may as well be delayed.

Ever, my dear Lord Bathurst,

Yours faithfully,

WELLINGTON.

*Memorandum by LORD LIVERPOOL.*

The instructions to Sir W. Clinton and Sir W. A'Court, as at present drawn, appear to me to combine every case in which the British force in Portugal ought to be brought into action. They are to act against any Spanish corps invading th

territory, or against any Portuguese corps collected in Spain, and entering the Portuguese territory from Spain.

They are not to be employed in putting down insurrections in Portugal, after the Portuguese corps above referred to have been driven out of the country or subdued.

Under these instructions Marshal Beresford, Sir W. Clinton, and Sir W. A'Court can have no difficulty in deciding what is to be done in the state of affairs, such as they were when we last heard from them, and they will probably have acted accordingly.

The *new* case which has occurred is the account of the collecting a Spanish army of observation on the frontier of Spain. Is the British corps to be permitted to form part of an army of observation upon the frontier of Portugal? My present impression is strongly against it. In the first place, I believe upon military grounds, though I speak this of course with diffidence (and subject to the correction of the Duke of Wellington), the British corps could be nowhere so well situated as in Lisbon and its neighbourhood. It might be kept together, and might keep in check the Spanish force on the whole line of their frontier, whereas, if it was marched towards one part of the frontier, and still kept together as a body, the Spaniards might enter at the other extremity and force us to retreat, or get into our rear.

In the second place, two armies of observation thus opposed to each other (if the Spanish army could for any time be kept together) might lead even unintentionally to war.

Thirdly, I have a strong impression that the Spanish army cannot long be kept together; that it will either fall to pieces by desertion, or that it will revolt.

If the latter should prove to be the case, and I think it highly probable, and this should occur in the presence and neighbourhood of an army of observation of which a British corps formed a material part, I am satisfied that Spain and all Europe would ascribe the revolt to the British authorities. I am inclined, therefore, to make no alteration in the present instructions, and, as soon as Portugal shall be cleared of hostile force, I think the best station for the British forces would be Lisbon, or such a circuit round it as would secure good cantonments, and ensure its collection in one body as soon as possible.

It has been mentioned that Parliament was sitting when the application for aid was made by Portugal to the Ministry. It had been assembled before the time originally intended in consequence of a sudden necessity. The summer had been of a dryness and heat almost unknown in this country, which, though it had not materially injured the wheat, had almost destroyed the inferior kinds of grain; and the alarm caused by the price to which oats and other articles of food used by the poorer classes in many districts had risen was so general and so well founded, that, at the beginning of September, the Ministers issued an Order in Council relaxing the restrictions on the importation of those articles from foreign countries, and substituting for the duties payable under the existing law a tax of two shillings a quarter on oats, and a correspondingly low one on rye and other produce of a similar class. And, as the issue of such an order manifestly required an Act of Indemnity to protect its framers, Parliament was at the same time summoned to meet in the middle of November. The very cause of its assembling, though the Order in Council was almost unanimously approved, seemed to invite an attack on the Corn Law; and the generality of feeling that it admitted of improvement was shown by the language held in the debate on the Address by the Duke of Buckingham, who, speaking in the interest of the agriculturists, affirmed the universal expectation to be that the Ministers would bring forward some new measure, "not to provide for high or low prices, for it was neither the interest nor the wish of the farmer to have high prices, but to place the trade in corn on the same footing as the other trades and manufactures of the country, protected only by such duties as might enable the British farmer to compete with the foreigner. What the farmers wanted was not high prices, but stability of price, such a stability as might enable them, in common with other traders, to

buy and sell their commodities with confidence and security." And, in fact, to the preparation of a measure which they believed calculated to produce such a result Lord Liverpool and Huskisson (who, in fulfilment of the old promise, had lately been taken into the Cabinet) had been for some weeks directing all their attention. Lord Liverpool's views will be seen in a letter which he addressed to Huskisson, commenting on a paper which that great economist had submitted to him with the proposal, if the Prime Minister approved of it, to circulate it among the members of the Cabinet; the paper, among other things, recommending "the getting rid altogether of prohibition as such, and establishing in place of it a scale of duties." Taking "a price of 60s. as the starting-point, and as equivalent to 90s. in 1815, Huskisson advised that when the average price in the market was 60s. the duty should be 20s., and that the duty should be diminished by 2s. for every shilling of increase in the price." On the other hand, "when the average price of corn fell below 60s. the duty should be augmented 2s. for every shilling fall in the price."

As he put it to Lord Liverpool, Huskisson "conceived that by such an arrangement the inducement to commit frauds in respect to the averages would be wholly done away. The rise or fall would be too gradual to admit of any considerable profits on that account, and there would be no adequate temptation for carrying on the speculations which under the existing system were supposed to exist whenever the ports, being closed, were likely to be opened."

As a further recommendation, he added that, "by this plan, a glut of importation could hardly ever arise; for, in proportion as the importation lowered the price, the duty would advance till it became absolutely prohibitory." Lord Liverpool's comment on this plan was a general approval of the principle on which it was framed, and his letter has a sort of melancholy interest from



the circumstance that he was on the point of bringing in a bill embodying the principle and combining it with some important details which occurred to himself, and which were approved by Huskisson not less than by the rest of his colleagues, when he was taken ill. Resolutions embodying them were to be introduced simultaneously in both Houses of Parliament on the 19th of February, and it was only on the 17th that he was rendered incapable of carrying out his intention.

Walmer Castle, October 25th, 1826.

MY DEAR HUSKISSON,

I am much obliged to you for your paper. I will not at present enter into the detailed reasoning in it, but, valuable as that reasoning, and the facts upon which it is founded, are in many respects, I doubt the prudence of circulating this paper amongst our colleagues. I wish to come at once, therefore, to the practical question.

I live here, as you know, in the midst of agriculturists with land of high farming and great produce, and on the other hand in the land of expensive farming, and expensive living amongst the farmers, so that we have all the good, and all the bad, of the present system.

I have had conversations since I have been here with some of the most intelligent gentlemen in this neighbourhood. They are dreadfully alarmed, but I have found them all agreed that they will be quite satisfied to be protected up to 60s. for the quarter of wheat: some add, rather looking upwards than downwards.

Upon the best consideration I have been able to give to the subject, I entirely concur in your mode of imposing the duty, and I should be quite satisfied with the scale and amount of duties suggested in your paper. I do not anticipate any very material difficulty as to the duty not exceeding 5s. when wheat reaches 70s. the quarter, and expiring altogether (or becoming merely nominal) when the price reaches 75s. But I think the country gentlemen will expect a protection of 25s. up to 55s. the quarter, or even to 60s.

If this however should be pressed, there could, I conceive, be no difficulty in still adhering to your principle, and only providing,



that between 60s. and 90s. the duty shall decrease at the rate of 1s. 6d. or 2s. for every shilling addition in the price, instead of the reduction of one shilling as proposed by you.

I do not think this alteration could materially increase the temptation to management and fraud in making up the average. I have thought it right to throw this out for your consideration, because it may be important to state the several shades and degrees of opinion, when we come to discuss this question in Cabinet, and because I think the *main points* are these, that 60s. is, as matters now stand, a *remunerating price*, and that *beyond* 60s. the monopoly ought to cease, and foreign corn flow into the country with a moderate duty.

I am expecting Canning to-morrow or Friday, and I shall of course have a full discussion with him on this subject. I leave this place in the course of next week, and intend being at Coombe on Saturday, November 4th.

Believe me, &c.

LIVERPOOL.

In the new Parliament everything appeared to promise an increase of strength to the Ministry. In the only divisions on which a section of the Opposition ventured, when, in the debate on the Address, Mr. Hume moved an amendment which was in effect a condemnation of their entire policy, and when Mr. Grattan afterwards proposed another implying a censure on their government of Ireland, the majorities for the Government were overwhelming;<sup>1</sup> and, as has been already mentioned, on the question in which Lord Liverpool took the greatest personal interest, that of Catholic Emancipation, it was already known that the present House of Commons was more inclined to agree with him than its predecessor had been.<sup>2</sup> Yet the week

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Hume's amendment was rejected by 107 *v.* 24, Mr. Grattan's by 135 *v.* 58.

<sup>2</sup> "Upon the number of new members in the House of Commons the Duke of Wellington mentioned the other day that the estimated votes on the next Roman Catholic question were 44 majority against it."—*Lord Colchester's Diary*, December 14, iii. 452.

before the Houses met, the Cabinet had to encounter a very serious danger in a remonstrance against their policy, addressed both to Lord Liverpool and the King, from one who at all times had great weight with his Majesty, and whose natural influence was greatly increased at this time by his situation. The Duke of York was dying. For four months he had been labouring under a dropsy, which had at last developed characteristics to which there could be but one termination. But his malady, though intensely painful, and his consciousness of his approaching end, in no degree abated his zeal for the public service and the welfare of his country after he should be taken away. He showed his public spirit in a most remarkable manner a month later, when, on learning the resolution which had been taken by the Cabinet to send a force to Portugal, he himself, with his own hand, drew up the heads of the military arrangements, and framed a set of instructions for the Commander-in-chief, marked by as careful attention to minute detail, and as lucid and intelligible in their directions, as could have been displayed while health granted him undisturbed exercise of his great abilities for organization.

The confinement of his sick-bed left him abundant leisure to ponder on the political condition of the country, and reflection not only strengthened his conviction of the necessity of maintaining the Protestant ascendancy and rejecting every claim of the Roman Catholics to an equality of civil privileges, but led him to adopt the idea also that this ascendancy was endangered by the conduct of the Cabinet. His anxiety was also awakened by the projected alteration in the Corn Laws, the character of which the ministers had not concealed, and which he disapproved, attaching an importance to the question which as yet it had hardly assumed in the eyes of the nation, though at a later period it became the cardinal point of policy on which the two parties of the State

were divided. And with these views he requested Lord Liverpool to call upon him, and, after a long conversation, delivered to him a memorandum which he had drawn up as containing the substance of his sentiments.

*Minute of communication to the Earl of Liverpool.*

*Secret.*

November 9th, 1826.

To assure his Lordship that in requesting this conference with him I am actuated by no ill-will towards him or his political connections ; on the contrary that I have been, and continue to be, the staunch friend and supporter of those principles which have ever been avowed by his Lordship, and by his old friends : I mean those which are connected with the maintenance of the Protestant ascendancy, and the support of the agricultural interests of the country.

That the whole tenour of my life must have convinced him of my extreme dislike to offer myself to public notice, or to take any prominent part in public affairs, and that nothing short of a sense of public duty, and of affection for my brother, and a sincere attachment to the Constitution of this realm, could call me forth.

That the present is one of those moments in which it seemed to me that we are on the brink of a precipice, although from peculiar circumstances no one appears to be aware of the danger.

That I wished to God the task of warning had fallen upon any other person, but that as I found no one would stand forward, I must, however unwilling, consider it an imperious duty to do so.

That I could assure Lord Liverpool that I had not consulted or communicated with any one upon this occasion, and that no person had the least idea of the step I am taking, above all, that it has been carefully concealed from the King, my brother, who would, or who might at least, feel himself placed in a very unpleasant situation towards his present Cabinet, composed as it now is, as he might appear to be playing a *double or under-hand game*, many of his ministers being known to agree in the opinions which Lord Liverpool has ever avowed, and which I,

in conjunction with all the leading interests in the country, and the steady partisans of the present Government, have ever supported.

That, without going back to the events which have taken place in the last twenty-six years, since this unfortunate Catholic question has agitated the public mind, I shall merely observe that the steady friends of the present Government are in a manner altogether persons who hold these tenets, and who have therefore ever viewed with a jealous eye the admission of persons whose sentiments upon this great question are so avowedly at variance with theirs; a feeling which, I am sorry to say, has been proved by all appearances not to be erroneous, as it is borne out by the weak and half measures which have from time to time been adopted, and which in my opinion, although they might lull for the moment, could not but add fuel to the fire. This has been amply shown by the late general elections, and by the conduct of the Roman Catholics.

That the Protestant interests stand at this moment in this extraordinary predicament: though the majority of his Majesty's ministers are considered, or rather avow themselves, against Catholic emancipation, which, adverting to the recent proceedings of that body, may be called Catholic *ascendancy*, yet, from the engagements which they are supposed to have contracted towards each other upon their joining in the Cabinet, both parties are pledged in honour to take no part in the furtherance of their respective views on this important question.

That this condition has not in any degree been observed by that part of the Cabinet which is inclined to Catholic emancipation, for, although they may have themselves refrained from infringing it, many of their own friends, warmly attached to the same tenets, and not shackled by the engagement entered into by the ministers, are actively employed in forwarding their views, and if the exertions of these were wanting, the whole of the Opposition, from a spirit of party, would be equally strenuous in giving to them the benefit of their exertions.

That the kingdom of Great Britain, indeed the great mass of the empire, is Protestant, and adheres strongly to the original Constitution of 1688, which is a Protestant Constitution, cannot be doubted one moment from the result of the general

election, in spite of the boldness of the Catholics, and the extraordinary efforts which have been made to check and awe the Protestants.

That there seems to be great despondency among a certain portion of the friends of the Constitution, especially in Ireland, which is much to be lamented, and which in my conscience I believe may be traced to their personal fears alone, and to an impression that those who had till now ever been their staunch advocates in this country were growing at least lukewarm upon the subject. The same feeling prevailed a year and a half ago, but Lord Liverpool will recollect how erroneous it proved when once the proper spirit was roused ; and I am convinced that, if duly called upon, we should experience the same support.

That although I have not communicated to any person the step I am taking, yet I have reason to know that I am speaking the sentiments of the great majority, if not of the whole, of those who form the main stay of the present Government ; and that these concur in opinion with me, that there is not time left for hesitation, or for endeavours to put off again the evil hour ; that what has passed in the south-west of Ireland at the elections shows but too clearly the state of that distracted country, and that it is imperative upon the Government to take a decisive measure and to bring the question at once to issue, and that any moment of delay in showing clearly the course which the Government intends to take, *as a Government*, is adding to the mischief.

In regard to the other great question of the Corn Trade, Lord Liverpool must have perceived how adverse the whole agricultural interests of the country are to the new measure proposed and more especially those great landholders who form the principal support of the Administration ; to whom may, in this instance, be added the majority of the Opposition.

That at any rate this is an experiment which, if it should fail must entail the dreadful alternative of the entire ruin of the landed interests of the empire, with which I am decidedly of opinion that the nation must stand or fall.

That I must therefore conjure his Lordship to take these objects to his most serious consideration, and to consult with those



who are best entitled to his confidence, before he comes to a final decision.

That I must repeat that no soul on earth is aware of the step I am taking, but that I shall think it my duty, my bounden duty, to seek the earliest opportunity of *communicating* its adoption to his Majesty, trusting that his Majesty will view it in its true light: I mean as proceeding from sincere affection for him, and an anxious desire to screen him from difficulty, and to secure to him the option of acting according to the dictates of his own judgment.

With the Duke himself Lord Liverpool's discussion of the views and arguments here expressed was, of course, verbal. But to the King he thought it due to his position at once to submit in writing the following observations:

Fife House, November 10th, 1826.

Lord Liverpool has been informed by his Royal Highness the Duke of York that it was his Royal Highness's intention to communicate to your Majesty a copy of the paper which he delivered to Lord Liverpool yesterday.

This paper Lord Liverpool considers as a *personal* communication, and such as he is not under any obligation to communicate to his colleagues. Lord Liverpool ventures, however, most dutifully to submit to your Majesty a few observations upon the Duke of York's paper.

Your Majesty will have the goodness to recollect all the circumstances which led to the formation of the present Administration in 1812. It was then deemed impracticable to constitute an administration upon the exclusive Protestant principle, and your Majesty was advised by Lord Liverpool and by others to agree to an understanding, by which the Roman Catholic question (as it was called) was no longer to be considered as a question of Government, but that your Majesty's servants, and all persons in office, should be at liberty to take the course in Parliament upon it which they might think proper, according to their own individual opinions.

Lord Liverpool is quite ready to admit that, though this decision may have been most wise and judicious at the time, yet it does

not follow that under all circumstances it may be practicable or advisable to adhere to it. If it should at any time be your Majesty's opinion that the course of policy of your Government ought to be altered in this respect, Lord Liverpool can assure your Majesty that he will throw no obstacles in the way of any measures which your Majesty may think proper to adopt for this purpose.

But Lord Liverpool feels that he owes it to your Majesty, to himself, and to his colleagues, to say that after all that has passed he could be no party to any arrangement founded upon the *exclusion* of those who were either friendly or hostile to the Roman Catholic question. Lord Liverpool would humbly suggest to your Majesty that it may be material that your Majesty should advert to the present state of the opinions of public men in the two Houses of Parliament, particularly of those in the House of Commons, upon the Roman Catholic question; and that your Majesty should seriously consider whether it would not be as impracticable, at least *now* as in 1812, to form an administration upon the exclusive Protestant principle, and whether the attempt to do so must not infallibly lead to an administration of an opposite character.

Lord Liverpool abstains at present from making any observations upon that part of the Duke of York's paper which relates to the Corn Laws, as he is quite certain he could satisfy your Majesty that his Royal Highness is acting under a misapprehension upon the whole of that subject.

Fife House, November 20th, 1826.

MY DEAR CANNING,

Sir William Knighton, by the King's command, delivered to me the enclosed paper before the Council to-day. The King afterwards spoke to me upon it. He said that I had done quite right in showing you what had already passed, and desired that I would communicate to you this letter of the Duke of York, as explaining his former statement, which his Royal Highness supposes me to have entirely misapprehended. It is not my intention to enter into any controversy with the Duke of York upon such a subject. My opinions are before the

King, and I have no desire under present circumstances to take any further step in the business.

I must just add that the King has not authorised me to take any copy of his letter, and I should not feel myself at liberty to do so without his consent.

Ever faithfully yours,

LIVERPOOL.

The King's answer, unluckily, cannot be found; but the latter of these letters shows that he conversed with Lord Liverpool on the subject, and we may infer that the minister was satisfied with the view which the King himself took of the Duke's paper and his reply. Nor is it superfluous to notice the indication afforded by the King's instructions to communicate what had passed to Canning that that minister had at last succeeded in gaining his favour; a matter which impending events rendered one of the greatest consequence. That the King should have admitted the cogency of Lord Liverpool's arguments, feeling, in all probability, that his brother's sentiments were unconsciously excited and coloured by his sufferings, was inevitable from the general sagacity of his judgment. He was quite aware that the state of the Ministry on the Catholic question was not such as Lord Liverpool himself would have preferred, had he seen his way to the formation of a Cabinet united in resistance. But both he and his minister had acquiesced in the existing arrangement as the only one practicable at the time; and there was no reason to think circumstances so altered in their general bearing, or indeed at all, that what was impossible then had become easier now. It is, at all events, clear that Lord Liverpool and the Cabinet generally retained the King's undiminished confidence.

Yet Lord Liverpool was far from being free from uneasiness. He had recently had a serious attack of illness, and, what was

feel the approach of a general decay. Before the end of the year he expressed his feelings on the subject to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Mr. Robinson, who had been discharging the arduous duties of his office with great benefit to the Government, through his popularity in the House of Commons, was nevertheless anxious to exchange it for some office which would require of him a less constant attendance in Parliament. The recent loss of a favourite child and the delicate health of his wife made him wish for more leisure time, which he might spend at home ; and with this feeling he proposed to Lord Liverpool to remove him to the House of Lords, pointing out "how efficiently Canning, Peel, and Huskisson represented the Government in the House of Commons upon all occasions, great and small ; while he might have it in his power to relieve Lord Liverpool himself from some of his labour in the House of Lords, by being ready, as he should be at all times, to take upon himself there any share of the debating business which might be wished." Lord Liverpool replied in these terms :

*Private.*

Coombe Wood, December 16th, 1826.

MY DEAR ROBINSON,

I must begin by telling you that I have been *very ill*. I am recovering, but this last illness I cannot but consider as a hint that I am better fitted now for repose than for the labours, and still more for the anxieties of the situation which I have held for so many years.

I can assure you that I enter most fully into all your domestic difficulties and feelings, and I will add that no arrangement could be more agreeable to me personally than the one you suggest, or more likely, under other circumstances, to enable and to induce me to continue some time longer in my present station. But such a change would be quite impracticable at the present moment. I cannot in a letter enter into all the particulars, but be assured the Government hangs by a thread. The Catholic question in its present state, combined with other



circumstances, will, I have little doubt, lead to its dissolution in the course of this session; and any attempt to make a *move* now, in the more efficient offices, would infallibly hasten the crisis.

In addition to these considerations, I should very much deprecate upon your own account your quitting the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer by any voluntary act of your own at this moment. This is the first session you will have had of real financial difficulty, and I do not think it would be for your credit that you should appear to shrink from it.

If any general change should occur, the case would be entirely altered, and your situation might be considered together with that of others; but, as I have already intimated, no such change could *now* take place, except as connected with the entire dissolution of the present Administration, and the formation of one on some other principle.

I will entreat you, therefore, to put any idea of a change in your present office out of your mind for the present. When we meet in town, I shall be able to give you explanations which will satisfy you that I have good and sufficient grounds for all I have been now saying.

I remain here till early in January, and I then go to Bath, where I shall remain till I settle in town about a week before the meeting of Parliament.

Believe me to be,

Very sincerely yours,

LIVERPOOL.

The above letter must have been dictated in some degree by a deeper conviction of the failure of his strength than he ventured to commit to paper; for the question which he puts in the foreground of his anxieties, that of Catholic Emancipation, was, as we have already seen, less likely to be pressed uncomfortably on the Cabinet than had been the case for years. Nor, perhaps, is it impossible that a suspicion that Canning, who was just his own age, was scarcely more equal to the fatigues of the coming session than himself, may have prompted his admonition



to his correspondent, that for his own sake he would be unwise to withdraw from his arduous post at the Exchequer at that particular time. If that consideration did weigh with him, it was an instance of singularly accurate foresight; for in eight months from the date of this letter not only he himself, but Canning, had passed away, and Mr. Robinson was Prime Minister. Mr. Robinson yielded to his arguments, or rather to his own anxiety to do nothing which could in the least degree have the effect of retarding Lord Liverpool's recovery: though he still desired that his retention of his present office should be considered as only temporary; adding, that if Lord Liverpool himself were to become unable any longer to bear the fatigues of office, "he could not be adequately replaced; and if by going into the House of Lords he" (Mr. Robinson) "could in any degree facilitate his continuance at the head of the King's Government, he was confident he should be rendering both to the King and to the country an infinitely greater service than he could do by retaining his present office."

Lord Liverpool's answer shows that his nerves had been completely shaken by his recent illness. He had always been of an anxious temperament, though his anxiety had never either clouded the clearness of his judgment nor shaken the steadiness of his resolution. But the Duke of York's conference with him, though, as we have seen, it had made no impression on the King, had led him to anticipate an opposition of a different character from that which he had hitherto had to encounter, an opposition from his own supporters; partly in resistance to his proposed new Corn Bill, and partly from a still more embarrassing cause, their discontent (as shadowed out in the Duke's expression of the same feeling) at his forbearance to give a decisive blow to the expectations of the Roman Catholics, which he saw no means of inflicting. The following letter shows more strongly than his first his extreme sense of the difficulties of his position:

*Private and confidential.* Coombe Wood, December 19th, 1826.

MY DEAR ROBINSON,

I have just received your letter. As I am desired to remain at Bath a full month, I am obliged to set out from hence on the 3d of January. I should be very glad indeed to have an *early* conversation with you, but I fear this arrangement will be inconsistent with your plans, unless you should think it would be an advantage to Lady Sarah's health and spirits to make a little tour on your way to town, and to come by Bath. You might then show her (if she has not seen them) Bath, Bristol, Cheltenham, and Oxford, without the annoyance of any society.

It is quite impossible to enter into the particulars to which I referred in my last letter, but I can assure you I have not come to the conclusion to which I then alluded without the strongest grounds for it.

Your *voluntarily* quitting the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer at the present moment would infallibly bring on the crisis which must lead to the dissolution of the Government. You say that you would be ready to let the change rest upon considerations *personal* to yourself, but there is one point which I think you must have overlooked, and that is, who is to be your successor? The truth is, a change in *such* an *office* can never be purely personal, but least of all under circumstances like the present.

I think it doubtful, *even now*, whether the present Administration will meet the Parliament on the 8th of February, but I know I speak the sentiments of others as well as of myself, that the only chance of its doing so is keeping the Government *exactly* as it is, and waiting the course of events when Parliament does meet, and the issue of the first discussions upon the Corn Bill and the Catholic question.

I am well aware that the Government has got over, and survived, many difficulties; but they never have been of the *nature* of those which it has now to encounter; and, independent of all other considerations, I do not really feel that I have health or strength to put myself, at my time of life, at the *head* of a *new*

*system*, even if I could see the prospect of such system being successful.

Believe me, ever faithfully yours,

LIVERPOOL.

In one respect he was about to meet Parliament under eminently favorable circumstances. As has been already mentioned, the expedition to Portugal had been wholly successful in the attainment of the object which had been proposed by it ; though it had revealed the existence of an unfriendliness towards us on the part of a large portion of the Portuguese people which could not have been suspected. Nor, though our success opened at once new questions which called for instant decision, were they likely to produce embarrassment either in the Cabinet or in Parliament. Their character will be sufficiently seen in the following letters, which, besides their political importance, have a melancholy interest as being almost the last that ever passed between the correspondents, so soon to be separated, so soon again to be reunited in death.

*Private and confidential.*

Bath, February 3d, 1827.

MY DEAR CANNING,

I hope this will find you recovered, though the weather is again very severe. You must not expose yourself to it. I have written to Bathurst to propose a Cabinet for Wednesday, which will, I understand, be more convenient than Tuesday. *Now* that Portugal is evacuated by the insurgents, we shall have to decide upon our line of *policy* in a new state of things. I was at first disposed, as you know, to connect an evacuation of Portugal with the evacuation of Spain by France ; but I have since seen reason to doubt the expediency of any such connection of the two questions. If they are not to be connected we must decide to do one of two things : either

To withdraw our army from Portugal at the earliest *practicable* moment, or

To leave it there till the whole business of Don Miguel is settled, and the Government firmly established in *his* hands or the *Infanta's*.

I see at present no *middle* course. I have no decided opinion upon either of these alternatives; but I rather incline to the first; which might, perhaps, be *modified* by a very large garrison at Gibraltar, such as would admit of detaching in case of necessity. Think this well over.

Ever sincerely yours,

LIVERPOOL.

*Private and confidential.*

Brighton, February 5th, 1827.

MY DEAR LIVERPOOL,

The best way of answering your questions upon Portugal will be to state to you the course in which my thoughts have been travelling, by which you will perceive that, though we have not divided the subject into the same heads, the conclusions at which we arrive are not very remote from each other.

It never occurred to me that we could properly determine, and openly state the determination, to leave our troops in Portugal as long as any French army remained in Spain, after France had taken the course which she did take upon the King's message, vouching for our facts, justifying our policy, and lending to us, as she unquestionably has, an honest and efficient support, beyond, perhaps, what we had a right to demand or to expect from her under all the difficulties of her own situation.

It would, I think, be an ungenerous return for this conduct on the part of France, to raise any angry question at the present moment upon the subject of her occupation of Spain. It cannot be truly pretended, however probable it might be *a priori*, that such would be the effect of her occupation; that occupation has, in fact, retarded the settlement between Spain and Portugal. It must be admitted that the partial reduction of it by the recall of the Swiss troops, whether, in truth, it had the effect or not, was intended to have the effect of facilitating that settlement. But when I say France, I mean Villèle; and believing, as I do, that he would be glad of any opportunity of getting out of Spain without dishonour, I should think it very unfair, as well as unwise, not to allow him the opportunity of making any advantage that he may think expedient of our withdrawing from the Peninsula. It is in this sense, that is, as a

mode of saving the point of honour to France, that I have latterly desired Granville to call Villèle's attention to that opportunity. While I would avoid, then, the putting forward of the French garrisons in Spain as the motive of our continuing in Portugal after our work there was completely done, I think the incidental facility which may be derived, in respect to the withdrawing of the French garrisons from Spain, from the withdrawing of ours from Lisbon, of great importance; and I should certainly, therefore, prefer that mode of proceeding which would afford the facility in the greatest degree. It appears to me, further, I confess, that the mode which would afford that facility in the greatest degree is also the mode which would be in other respects the most advisable.

Our objects in the expedition to Portugal were, 1. To repel foreign aggression, and to put down (or enable the Government of Portugal to put down) the internal disturbances which had grown out of it. 2. To obtain from Spain atonement for the past by the establishment of direct political relations with Portugal, and security for the future by satisfactory assurances and engagements. 3. To watch over the full performance of such engagements and assurances.

The first and second of these objects may be admitted to be accomplished. Aggression is repelled, insurrection is subdued, the assurances obtained from Spain are such as we cannot but say that we believe; but, remains the performance of them. Now, as the essence of the Spanish apology for past disappointment in this respect consists in the alleged disobedience of Spanish authorities on the frontier to the orders of the Government; and as it is impossible not to apprehend that the new army, levied for the execution of the present engagements of the Court of Madrid, *may* prove either unfaithful or inadequate to its purpose, I think we should leave the third object of our expedition miserably incomplete if we were to withdraw our force from Portugal before the performance of the assurances and engagements of Spain shall have been fully and satisfactorily ascertained.

How many months will be sufficient for this purpose, I cannot pretend to determine; nor is it in my opinion desirable to measure the interval so much by the time to elapse, as by the



purposes to be accomplished. One thing is clear to my mind, and appears to be so to yours, which is, that we are not out of our difficulty till the question of regency shall have been settled, or, at least, until it shall appear in what tone and temper the discussion of that question is likely to be taken up by foreign Powers, when anything practical is to be decided upon it.

The first impulse upon this question may probably be given by the arrival of the decision of the Emperor Don Pedro, solicited, but not prescribed, by Mr. Gordon. He was to solicit the decision of the litigated point of the regency, not to suggest in whose favour that decision should be.

It is possible, however, that Don Pedro, having actually despatched his ship of the line with an invitation to Don Miguel to repair to Brazil, may suspend any answer to the reference made to him respecting the regency until Mr. Neumann's arrival at Rio de Janeiro. The Emperor will then learn that the Court of Vienna deprecates Don Miguel's visit to Brazil, and is prepared to advise against it. It is still further possible that, holding all that Mr. Neumann may be instructed to say to him very cheap, Don Pedro may take no step whatever until he shall have received the Infant Don Miguel's own refusal to embark for Rio de Janeiro.

It is possible that either upon the intimation through Mr. Neumann, or upon the more authentic refusal of Don Miguel, Don Pedro may revoke altogether his intention of conferring the regency on Don Miguel when of age (if such were indeed his intention), and may confer it on the Infanta Regent until the majority of the Queen.

In either of the latter cases might not Portugal, left to herself, with a Spanish army on her frontier, be exposed to the most imminent danger? A danger which the mere existence of British troops in Portugal would avert.

Observe; it is a matter of indifference to British interests whether the regency, during the minority of the Queen, be vested in the Infanta, or in Don Miguel, provided it be so vested in the one or the other, by competent and acknowledged authority. But it is idle to delude ourselves, or to suffer ourselves to be deluded, with the notion that the partisans of Don Miguel mean any such thing; they mean (to a man) that Don

Miguel should find his way through the regency (as the readiest open door) to counter-revolution, and the restoration of absolute monarchy. The attempt to effect this object by a foreign force, after ours had been withdrawn, would replunge us in all the difficulties from which we have so happily extricated ourselves on the present occasion. The withdrawing our army in part, in great part even, to Gibraltar, would, in my opinion, be no adequate provision against this or any similar danger ; on the contrary, the greatly increasing the garrison of Gibraltar would imply of itself the admission of *some* danger, but whether continued or contingent, whether arising from the French in the occupation of Cadiz, or from the Spaniards on the frontiers of Portugal, or from both, would be the fruitful source of anxious conjecture.

My opinion, therefore, inclines strongly to the second branch of your alternative : the leaving our army in Portugal until all the pending questions of the regency shall be settled, preparing with as much speed and diligence as is consistent with our principles and our discretion the best means of an amicable settlement of them.

But I do not think that this reason for our stay need be publicly alleged. I think that the complete performance of the task which we originally prescribed to ourselves, that of rendering Portugal safe, either against hostile aggression or against foreign interference in its concerns, justifies, nay, prescribes the continuance of our army in Portugal until that kingdom shall have been placed beyond those dangers, that is, until it shall have been proved that the Government of Spain has not only the intention which it professes, but the power to compel obedience in those by whom its intentions are to be executed.

I think that the questions of the regency will almost necessarily fall within the period to which, on this plain and simple ground, the stay of our army will be prolonged. And if so, I incline to think it unnecessary that the specific reason of those expected discussions should be declared : (I mean, of course to foreign Powers, not to the Cabinet).

Lastly, I think that the opportunity afforded by that continued stay of our army may be turned to account, not only without offence, but in the most amicable manner, for affording to M. Villèle a retreat out of Spain ; a retreat which I entertain

the most perfect confidence that he sincerely desires, and for which it is just at this moment a peculiar facility that Austria, contrary to all human expectation, is setting the example by withdrawing her troops from Naples.

I think that by the withdrawing our army from Lisbon precipitately, we may throw this opportunity away.

Such is the whole of my opinion upon a subject that strikes me as rather complicated than difficult ; but of which, in dividing it into its parts, the principles and the policy appear to me to be sufficiently plain.

I must only remark in concluding, that I assume, without reasoning, two propositions :

1. That the permanent establishment of the French army in Spain *is* a disparagement to this country, and an evil to Europe.
2. That the imposition of Don Miguel upon Portugal, not by his brother the Emperor, as Regent, but by foreign force or intrigue, as absolute King, would, after all that has passed, be a deadly disgrace as well as a lasting injury to England.

If there are persons who maintain the contrary of these two propositions (you, I am sure, are not among them), let us have these discussions fairly out before we come to any decision. Let not a discussion involving such consequences be taken on apparently other grounds. There is no hurry.

I send you a copy of an official note received from the Spanish minister, enclosing a despatch from his Court, and of the answer which I return to it. You will see that though I do not anticipate in my answer anything relating to the movements of our troops, there is enough in it to prepare Spain for the possibility of their continuance in Portugal until all the engagements of Spain shall have been effectually carried into execution.

Adieu. I am quite exhausted with dictating this long letter.

Ever sincerely yours,

GEORGE CANNING.

LORD LIVERPOOL'S *Reply*.*Most secret and confidential.*

Fife House, February 6th, 1827.

MY DEAR CANNING,

I quite agree with you that the important discussion to which your confidential letter of yesterday refers, does not press in point of time.

It may be as well, perhaps, to know a little more before we come to a decision upon it. At all events, the delay of a week or a fortnight, until you are sufficiently recovered to come to town and to meet the Cabinet, can be of no material importance.

I have communicated with no one upon the subject, nor is it my intention to do so till after your return to town.

I have no objection to making our occupation and evacuation of Portugal an assistance to France, or rather to Villèle's Government, if this can be done without embarrassing ourselves, as to continuing in Portugal, or going out of it, when it might be otherwise our interest to come to a decision upon this point.

I feel likewise the full weight of all you say respecting the necessity of our continuance till Spain shall have carried into execution her promises, and even till she shall have dispersed her army collected on her frontier. But the question upon which I have my doubts (they are at present only doubts) is, whether our continuance in Portugal should not be limited to these objects.

If it should be so limited, our policy would be simple and intelligible. We went to Portugal, not for the purpose of interfering in the internal disputes of parties in that country, not to support liberty on the one hand, nor despotism on the other; not to maintain the charter (good as it may be); but because we were called upon by Portugal to enable Portugal to resist foreign aggression. Remove, then, foreign aggression, give the necessary satisfaction, and ought we not on our own principles to retire?

But I look further, and more particularly to what is for our interest. If we do not limit our interference to the above objects, shall we not be necessarily, though unintentionally, involved in all the internal struggles which may take place in Portugal during our continuance in it? Shall we not become

decided partisans of the Charter, against those who may wish as Portuguese to destroy it ; and shall we not be considered as keeping our army in Portugal for the sole purpose of maintaining it ?

I admit that, until the *whole question* connected with Don Miguel is determined, Portugal will be subject to internal convulsion. But can we remain with a military force in Portugal, during such convulsion, without taking some decided part ? And is it most for our interest to take such part, or to retire when satisfied as to the proceedings of Spain, declaring that the Portuguese must be left to themselves, and that we will not suffer Spain, or any other country, to interfere in their internal concerns ?

If you were to canvass the opinion of the country, I am satisfied it would be in favour of the latter course.

I do not, however, conceal from myself that this course may subject us to many difficulties and inconveniences.

The overthrow of the Charter, and the restoration of absolute power in the hands of Don Miguel, might be an eventual consequence, and such a termination (however it might happen) would be a triumph to Spain, and the Apostolicals throughout Europe ; and would for a time destroy British influence at Lisbon.

We must not, however, deceive ourselves. If we remain with our military force in Portugal, we remain there to support, influence, and direct their Government. Indeed, if the result of which we may be apprehensive, the triumph of the Apostolicals, should take place, with our army in Portugal and taking no part, the consequences would be, in some respects, more disgraceful than its occurring when we were absent.

In considering this whole question, we must take into the account that our army has certainly not been well received in Portugal, and that we are by no means popular there.

The parties, likewise, into which the country is divided are much more nearly balanced than we had reason to believe, when we decided on the expedition.

Believe me to be, my dear Canning,

Very sincerely yours,

LIVERPOOL.



Two more letters which I subjoin relate to a difficulty which was embarrassing and vexatious to both, the extreme jealousy which an influential party among the supporters of the Ministry felt of Huskisson. It had displayed itself from the earliest mention of an alteration in the Corn laws. As early as the beginning of October Lord Liverpool had written to Canning that "they must certainly be prepared for a storm on the Corn question." He himself, the day before, had seen "a considerable number of our first agriculturists at a public meeting and dinner ; he had found them very sore and sulky, though most of them were rather attached than otherwise to the present Government. He had, however, had some private conversation with them, and he thought he should be able to manage most of them ; but he could not describe their jealousy and suspicion of Huskisson. They believed that it was his *intention* to sacrifice them to the commercial interest, and that he would succeed in carrying his point in spite of his colleagues. He was," therefore, "more than ever persuaded of the necessity of keeping Huskisson as much as possible in the background in all these discussions, and preventing, if he could, any *early combination* before the intentions of Government were known."

The feeling which he had described was not, indeed, universal ; for "the most intelligent and leading of those to whom he had referred professed that they should be quite satisfied with a protection of sixty shillings for wheat, and for other grain in proportion. And he did not think that Huskisson had looked beyond this. But then," he added, "some of them want *new protection* for their wool and their timber : that is quite impracticable. All that he had heard satisfied him of the necessity of coming to a decision upon the whole question in Cabinet when they should meet on the eighth of the next month" (November).

That decision, as has been already intimated, was adopted in precise conformity with his judgment. But it is a singular proof of the vehemence, or perhaps it would

be fairer only to say, the earnestness of the general feeling on the subject, that he anticipated that on both sides of the two Houses it would preponderate even over the interest so long attached to the Catholic question; while at the last moment the difficulty was increased by the illness of Canning, which threatened to compel Lord Liverpool to entrust the advocacy of the proposed measure to other hands than those which had been originally selected for the task.

*Private and confidential.*

Fife House, February 10th, 1827.

MY DEAR CANNING,

I am afraid I must now assume that there is no chance of your being sufficiently recovered to undertake to open the Corn question, with any safety to yourself, on the 19th, or even on the 26th, if the business (as it might) should be put off till that day.

We must determine, therefore, what is to be done in your absence. Since my return to town I have reason to know that there is as much irritation and jealousy existing upon this question as we experienced in the last session, and that we shall probably meet with serious difficulty in every stage of it.

The only chance, perhaps, of carrying it through with anything like good humour depends upon its being introduced into the two Houses as a measure of general government, and not as a Departmental question.

Assuming this to be the character of the measure, you are the natural and proper person to bring it forward in the House of Commons; and as you are unfortunately prevented by indisposition from attending, the duty would fall upon Peel, as the other Secretary of State in that House.

I am afraid that this arrangement (I mean, of course, Peel being the mover in your absence) will not be agreeable to Huskisson; but is it possible that he should be wholly insensible to the unjust prejudice which prevails respecting him? and would he, upon a mere question of pride and etiquette, risk the success of a measure which he thinks, more than any of us, is become essential to the best interests of the country.

I have as yet said nothing to him, or to Peel, upon the subject. Harrowby, Melville, and Robinson, with whom I have spoken entirely agree with me in opinion.

I can have no difficulty (however painful it may be) to communicate to Huskisson my opinion, but his acquiescence may very much depend upon your concurrence, and upon your feeling that you can state to him that concurrence in such a way as may give it its full effect.

I am truly concerned to be obliged to trouble you upon so ver disagreeable a subject at present; I have delayed writing to you upon it as long as possible, but we may be called upon for some explanation as to our course of proceeding on Monday.

Do not put yourself to the inconvenience of writing with your own hand. Let Stapleton write for you upon this and any other confidential matter on which you may wish to communicate with me. I have no accounts of you this morning, but I hope we shall hear soon, and that you are in progress towards recovery. You must, however, give yourself time.

The course adopted respecting the Roman Catholic question is very provoking.

Ever sincerely yours,

LIVERPOOL.

*Private and confidential.*

Fife House, February 13th, 1827.

MY DEAR CANNING,

All that I meant by the word *provoking* in reference to the Catholic question was this, that it was *provoking* to have the debates upon the two questions so close upon each other that people's heads would be full of *both* at the same time. I thought it would have been wiser (if there had not been other reasons in the way) to have broken the neck of the Corn question before you had entered on the Catholic question.

I have, personally, no objection to an early decision on the Catholic question; and upon reflection, I am inclined to think that the two questions coming together may not, upon the whole, be an evil. It will certainly make the debate upon the Catholic question comparatively flat, for whatever may be the relative importance of the two questions, the greater part of

those who vote on either side of the Catholic question will be *thinking* about corn.

As to the mode of proceeding by resolution instead of bill, I give no opinion upon it. I certainly doubt the policy of sending to the House of Lords a resolution in preference to a bill, if this is the object of those who move in the business.

I wish you had said something about your health, but I conclude from your silence that you are going on well.

The two Houses were quite satisfied, yesterday, as to the propriety of fixing the 26th, positively, for the Corn question.

Ever sincerely yours,

LIVERPOOL.

He was not, however, in his own feelings, as unfitted to deal with the difficulty mentioned in the letter just quoted as he would have been a few weeks before. The visit to Bath, from whose waters he had often before derived great benefit, appeared to have recruited his strength. When Parliament re-assembled, on the 8th of February, he was able again to resume his place, and the first instance on which he made more than a passing remark became one of singular interest when, before the end of the same week, he himself fell into a state which would have sanctioned similar language being held respecting himself. On the 5th of January the Duke of York had died, and on Monday the 12th of February Lord Liverpool rose, as leader of the House, to propose an address of condolence on his loss to the King, which in this instance was not required solely by form and custom, but by the intimate and sincere affection which it was well known that the two brothers had always felt towards each other. As it may be looked on as Lord Liverpool's last speech, he was fortunate in his subject, for he had to dwell on the career of one who, whatever had been his private frailties, had unquestionably done great public service to the State. With the exception of the late sovereign himself, more than sixty years had elapsed since the grave had closed

over any prince who was something more than a prince; but, though the Duke of Cumberland also had been Commander-in-chief, as a hard-working servant of the State he could bear no comparison with him who had just been taken away. "It had been made," Lord Liverpool said, "a question with some whether a person so near to the throne ought to hold such an office; or, in other words, whether such an arrangement was for the public interest. He was of opinion that, if this question were looked at as an abstract proposition, it would be impossible to come to any general conclusion on it. However, leaving that question undecided, he had no hesitation in admitting that inefficiency in such appointments of princes of the blood would be far worse than inefficiency in other persons. But he could himself say from experience, and all who knew anything of the British army, and he believed also the greater part of the public would also say, that the interests of the army had derived most essential benefit from the administration of the illustrious individual whose loss they were deploring, and who, he was sure their Lordships would concur with him in saying, had in his situation done much good, had done all the good in his power, and had in many instances done much good which none but himself could have done." He dwelt upon the administrative skill with which the Duke had formed the army which ultimately "turned the fate of a war on the result of which the best interests of this country and of all Europe were involved," upon the admirable impartiality with which he had distributed his great patronage, and, above all, on his unwearied attention to the well-doing and comfort of the private soldier. Nor did he withhold his testimony (the more touching if his hearers had known the pain which the Duke's last communications with him had inflicted on himself) to "the openness, sincerity, and kindness which had appeared in all his actions: a kindness so striking that it impressed all who lived near him, or had any intercourse with him; a sincerity so unvarying that it had been truly



said of him that he never broke a promise, and never deserted a friend."

It was a singular instance of bad feeling and bad taste in the leaders of the Whig party in the House, that they carried their political animosity beyond the grave, and broke through the custom which prescribed that the address should be seconded by one of their party. Not one of them rose to express either their concurrence in the eulogy, of which none could deny the justice, or even their sympathy with their sovereign, whose real sorrow they were well aware required what consolation could be afforded him.<sup>1</sup>

The question on which Lord Liverpool declined pronouncing a decision, whether so great and responsible an office as that of Commander-in-chief should be entrusted to an individual so near the throne, has been practically revived in our own time by the appointment of the nephew of the Prince of whom he was then speaking. On abstract principles it may probably be thought that, when the royal family can supply one of its members fitted by military experience and professional habits for such a post, his superior rank and necessary isolation, which protect him from those claims of kindred or political partisanship that may be brought to bear upon the very greatest of the ordinary subjects of the sovereign, do of themselves form a high and very important qualification for the office. And if this be admitted, it is plain that, where the previous

<sup>1</sup> "He (Lord L.—) moved the address of condolence to the King upon the death of the Duke of York very well, feelingly and judiciously, *nem. con.* but no speech from any Opposition Lords in concurrence."—*Lord Colchester's Diary*, February 12, 1827, iii. 459. It is remarkable that on the death of the Duke of Cumberland some of the same party had similarly disgraced themselves by an exhibition of petty malevolence. Horace Walpole, who remarks that "the middling and lower orders wore mourning for him for a longer period than had been enjoined," adds, "The Duchess of Bedford distinguished her animosity by wearing slighter mourning for the Duke than that prescribed by the Court."—*Memoirs of the Reign of George III.* ii. 227.

training of our princes has made such an arrangement practicable, it is calculated, in more than one respect, to be of great advantage. It is especially desirable for themselves, as holding out to their honorable ambition the prospect of distinction as meritorious servants of the State, in the only path which their birth does not close against them. It is hardly less beneficial to the people in general from the example it affords to all that the very highest rank and station is so far from being exempt from the necessity of industry, that it derives an additional lustre from the recognition of its obligations to the country, and the steady performance of laborious duty.

On the Friday Lord Liverpool once more addressed the House, to propose an augmentation of the income of the Duke of Clarence, now become heir presumptive to the throne. But his friends remarked a great alteration in his appearance and manner, and the forebodings with which they were struck were too soon justified. The next morning he retired to his library, as usual, after breakfast, and was shortly afterwards found by his servant on the floor in a state of insensibility. He had fallen to the ground under a combined attack of apoplexy and paralysis; and though he lingered for nearly two years, he scarcely ever awoke to perfect consciousness, and there was never for a moment a hope of his recovering the least degree of either mental or bodily health. He lay in a state between life and death till the 4th of December, 1828, when a fresh attack carried him off. He had been twice married: first, when a very young man, to Lady Louisa Hervey, daughter of the eccentric Bishop of Derry, the fourth Earl of Bristol; and after her death, in 1822, to Miss Chester, who survived him. He left no children, and was succeeded in the earldom by his brother. The fact that it is impossible to give any account of his private life is in itself a testimony to his steady cultivation of the domestic virtues. He inspired both his wives with sincere affection as well as

esteem, but there is scarcely a trace of any correspondence between them because they were never separated. Many of the letters which have been quoted from his friends and colleagues show how, in their case also, deep regard for the man was mingled with respect for and confidence in the statesman.

As a minister Lord Liverpool may perhaps be admitted not to have been distinguished by any striking originality of views or rapid fertility of resource ; but he possessed qualities, if less showy, more valuable and better calculated to carry a nation with wide and complicated interests in safety through periods of difficulty and peril. He had a calm and sound judgment ; a shrewd insight into the characters of men ; a clear discernment of the means best adapted to secure his objects ; while his natural acuteness was sharpened and strengthened by most extensive information on every subject which could affect the deliberations of an English Cabinet. Called to preside over the councils of the nation at one of the most critical periods of its history, he was fortunate in having been singularly trained for that, the most important office in the world, by his previous career. Having already filled every Secretaryship of State, (an advantage never possessed by any other minister,) he had of necessity a thorough acquaintance with the duties and requirements of every department : with the details of our domestic affairs, including those of Ireland ; with the interests and varied resources of our colonies in every quarter of the globe ; with the feelings and objects of foreign countries, in many instances with the personal peculiarities of their statesmen and princes. The fact of his being thus guided in his decisions by an unexampled extent of information was of itself sufficient, even had it not been the natural disposition of his mind, to give him firmness and consistency, qualities which no man ever showed more conspicuously than he on many occasions ; while even of his bitterest opponents none ever questioned his unsullied integrity, his undeviating freedom from jobbery

of every kind, his rare scrupulousness in the distribution of his patronage, particularly of the ecclesiastical preferments in his gift ; his perfect disinterestedness, displayed in the fact, not so unusual in Britain as in other countries, that he impaired his own fortune and left office a poorer man than he had entered on it. As a minister in another point of view, that is, as the leader of a party and of the House of Lords, he was equally conspicuous for his unruffled temper, his ever ready and unvarying courtesy and affability, his entire possession of that quality known as tact, which not only adheres to its own resolutions without ever giving offence, but even conciliates and often wins over those whose interests or passions are most thwarted by them. As an orator, if it be admitted that his eloquence was not of the very highest order, that admission is as great a deduction as can fairly be made from his reputation. He had neither the terrible sarcasm nor stately declamation of Pitt, the fervid and at times poetic imagination of Burke, nor the lively fancy and sparkling wit of Canning ; but his speeches were at all times distinguished for a wide range and accuracy of knowledge, for lucidity of statement, and, above all, for that manly spirit which forbade him ever to shrink from responsibility, and led him on all occasions to state his case, whether in attack or in defence, in the recommendation of his own measures or in opposition to the proposed policy of his antagonists, in the most straightforward manner ; to place every question on the broadest, the plainest, the boldest issue.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lord Brougham's testimony to his character as a speaker in this point of view is very strong. "He was never known to utter a word at which any one could take exception. He was, besides (a much higher praise), the most fair and candid of all debaters. No advantage to be derived from a misrepresentation, or even an omission, ever tempted him to forego the honest and the manly satisfaction of stating the fact as it was, treating his adversary as he deserved, and at least reciting fairly what had been urged against him, if he could not successfully answer it."—*Historical Sketches of Statesmen of the Time of George III.*



His career as minister is in itself a sufficient evidence of the possession of the high qualities here ascribed to him. Though there is a want of correctness in the statement which has been made that the Regent permitted his existing Cabinet to nominate their chief, it is quite true that the Prince selected him chiefly from the knowledge that every member of the Ministry considered him the fittest person to be placed at their head ; and the result fully justified their opinion. The whole period of his administration was so full of difficulties that it may almost be affirmed that its easiest time was while he was conducting to its conclusion the greatest war the world has ever seen. Without detracting from the unrivalled merit of our great general, it may still be truly said that of that conclusion a great portion of the credit attaches also to the minister, for the energy with which he provided him with the means of achieving his triumphs, and the prompt decision with which he decided on the renewal of the war when the old disturber of nations again raised his standard at Fréjus. The distresses which followed the re-establishment of peace would have been incurred under any Ministry ; and must have been ten times greater if Lord Liverpool had not unchangeably adhered to his duty of returning to cash payments at the earliest moment. These difficulties he surmounted, and left the kingdom in peace and security at home and abroad, and in a condition of previously unequalled and steadily increasing prosperity ; and this progressive prosperity was in a great degree his own work. His father had been distinguished for great financial knowledge and abilities, from which circumstance he himself in his youth had naturally acquired a taste for questions of finance, and had made himself a complete master of their intricacies. He had imbibed also the principles of Free-trade from his first chief, Pitt ; and his introduction of Huskisson into the Government was chiefly prompted by his eagerness to return to that



liberal system of commerce in which that greatest of ministers had been interrupted by the French war.

His foreign policy, too, may be judged by its fruits. He left the country at peace, and at peace founded on principles of such solidity that, except in the instance of Navarino, our share in which, as has been already mentioned, was caused by a momentary departure from the system which he had laid down, nearly thirty years were still to elapse before a British gun fired a hostile shot in any part of Europe ; and at the same time this preservation of tranquillity for a period so unexampled was so far from being purchased by any unworthy submission, or compromise with the claims of duty and honour, that never in her history had this country assumed a bolder and prouder attitude than in the very last transaction of Lord Liverpool's Administration, her interference for the protection of Portugal. Nor did the greatness of her reputation, and consequently her predominant weight in the councils of the Continent, ever receive a more practical and more triumphant acknowledgment than when the mere declaration of her will, and the presence of a handful of British troops, sufficed to prevent a war which was almost begun ; to make Spain withdraw her hands from a prey which she had believed to be at her mercy ; while the entire Holy Alliance was reduced to acquiesce without resistance, and even without remonstrance, in an act which was universally felt to be a defiance of its maxims and a counteraction of its objects.

He was not infallible. On the subject of Catholic Emancipation he may be considered to have taken a narrow view, not altogether compatible with the general large-mindedness of his principles, though recent occurrences are tending to justify his predictions of the ultimate results of that measure to an extent that but a few months ago would have seemed impossible. We may doubt also the wisdom of open questions, of which on this subject he set

the example; but it cannot be denied that the adoption of such a plan secured to the King's Government the services of abler men than could have been induced to co-operate on any other understanding, while the claims of the Catholics remained unsettled. And it is a great proof of his own force of character and influence that he held men together differing as widely as Eldon and Canning.

When we recollect that his Administration lasted fifteen years, a longer duration than that of almost any other Government in the history of the country; that those fifteen years were full of great and multiform difficulties; that during the whole period he was constantly exposed to attacks from antagonists not undistinguished by very high ability, certainly not encumbered with any superfluous scruples or delicacy, and who would have been formidable indeed to a Cabinet as feeble and disunited as they were wont to describe that over which he presided; that he defeated all their opposition; and, steadily pursuing his own policy, expanded the resources of the nation in every direction, and was continuing to do so when he was arrested by the merciless hand of disease: when all this is remembered, to deny that such a Ministry was eminently successful is little better than childish petulance; to doubt that the minister who was not in name only, but in reality and effect the head of that Ministry, was a man of great powers and high qualities, is equally unreasonable.

Burke has described Sir Robert Walpole as one who, "without being a genius of the first class, was an intelligent, prudent, and safe minister." Walpole's reputation probably stands higher now than in the last century; yet the qualification attached to Burke's praise of him is but a slight deduction from it, if with sober judgment we consider the history of nations. In the first place, it will certainly not prevent him from being compared advantageously with the generality of statesmen: for few indeed in the annals of any country are they to whom the

most partial judgment could attribute such genius. And secondly, it is rather the steady light of practical good sense which is usually required for the government of nations than the dazzling flashes of genius, which in the transactions of life too often leads its possessor and his admirers equally astray. Intelligence and prudence are far safer guides than the brilliant quickness which, ambitious of the praise of originality, despises the beaten track ; or the speculative ingenuity which, more mischievously still, would alike mould the feelings of mankind and fashion the arrangements of a state in accordance with abstract principles and vague ideas of symmetry and perfection.

Such intelligence and prudence Burke deservedly attributes to Walpole ; and in a still greater degree they belonged to Lord Liverpool : while he was wholly free from Walpole's great fault, that jealousy of his colleagues which was not content with being recognised as their superior unless they were reduced to the position of ciphers, and which avoided the co-operation of men of ability, apparently from a weak fear that their reputation might diminish his personal authority. Lord Liverpool was wiser. He sought for the highest talent in each department, even though the possessor might not be on every point animated by the same opinions as himself. Walpole drove Carteret from office, and rejected the alliance of Pitt. But of those who since Lord Liverpool's retirement have succeeded him at the Treasury no fewer than seven had been members of his Administration ;<sup>1</sup> he who as a minister has left the most enduring mark on the history of his country, (Sir Robert Peel,) being emphatically his pupil. Yet, as we have seen, while thus amply providing for the efficiency of each separate department, he never gave up the authority or pre-eminence of his own office. In every measure of domestic or foreign policy he was essentially

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Canning, Lord Goderich, the Duke of Wellington, Sir R. Peel, Lord Melbourne, Lord Aberdeen, and Lord Palmerston.

the Prime Minister : on whose soundness of judgment, as well as on whose steady support, his colleagues could at all times thoroughly rely. Eminent for virtue and ability as have been many of those who in the same office have governed this country, Pitt alone has achieved a more brilliant, no one has left a more spotless fame.

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